SOUTH INDIAN CELEBRITIES

VOL. 1

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SKETCHES

BY

K. M. BALASUBRAMANIAM

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TO

The Freedom-Loving South
Indian Federation of Youth.

PREFACE.

Pen-pictures of contemporary politicians and of prominent persons in other fields as well, have been a common enough feature of political journalism in England for a pretty long time. It has come to stay as a permanent fashion. India, especially Madras, has introduced that fashion into its literary world and at least two books have been published portraying the pictures of a particular set of persons and personalities. There is no doubt but that those books are avowedly modelled on the classic works of A. G. Gardiner, who is the celebrated father of that singularly picturesque style which is best suited to convey true pictures of persons. And this work of mine is yet another attempt to introduce that feature in the literary and journalistic world of Madras, with what amount of success I cannot pretend to say. It is impossible for me to hide the fact that A. G. Gardiner has been used rather liberally in the matter of quoting English prototypes to Indian public men.

Again this book, though it is entitled "South Indian Celebrities", will be perceived to contain pictures of practically of a particular party and exclusively of the Non-Brahmin Tamil section. But I need no apology for its being so. For it is the consequence and not the cause of exclusive treatment of a particular section of persons. It has so happened, perhaps that is but natural, that while one book treats of Andhra Celebrities alone, another book gives us portraits of persons and personalities living in a limited area and belonging to a particular community. The result was that politi-

cians of at least as much prominence as these, if not more prominent than they, have been, I will not say ignored but left unhonoured and unportrayed.

Simply to write about these persons does not necessarily mean that one should unreservedly chant the hymn of their praise. That may be Boswellian biography; it is not impartial and true sketches of the real men. Devoid of the alloy of defects and drawbacks, even the purest gold of resplendent genius will neither be strong and shining nor fit for currency in this imperfect world of ours. I have accordingly attempted to draw pictures true to life, without fear or favour. If, however, as is but inevitable I should be found to have been "to their virtues a bit too kind and to their faults a little blind," I request my kind reader to put it down to my party partiality that is too much bred up in my bones.

These sketches are intended to sum up movements as well as characters. These are studies 'not only of portraits but portents." It will be perceived that almost all these characters are connected with and have acted in, the political drama of the post-reform era. They have had to work or they have helped to work the Montford Reform popularly called dyarchy in the provinces. A common thread of communal policy might be seen to run through the character and career of most of these persons, under whatever Party label they might have chosen to work. Co-operation with the Powers-that-be is another feature of their life. It is particularly note-

worthy that these sketches (and a few among those to be written about in Volume II) appear at a time in the history of India when "old order changeth, just yielding place to new." The new Constitution that is going to be introduced in the very near future, will provide, it is presumed a political stage of an altogether different nature and atmosphere from those of the Montford Reform stage. Hence it is in the nature of stock-taking and retrospective evaluation of the politicians of the dyarchic era.

Three sketches have already appeared in the 'Sunday Observer' of Madras and the sketch of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi has appeared in 'Stri Dharma' and I thank the respective Editors of those Organs for having permitted me to republish them here. The article on Sir R. K. Shanmukham was written immediately after his election to the Presidential Chair and except for a few lines added now, it has been reproduced unchanged.

I am in duty bound to thank in all sincerity such of those friends and well-wishers of mine (they are too numerous to mention by name) as have readily and rapturously encouraged me in this undertaking by their warm approbations and wise suggestions and have thus enabled me to greet the reading public with the garnered fruits of my first harvest.

MADRAS,
8th December 1934. } K. M. BALASUBRAMANIAM.

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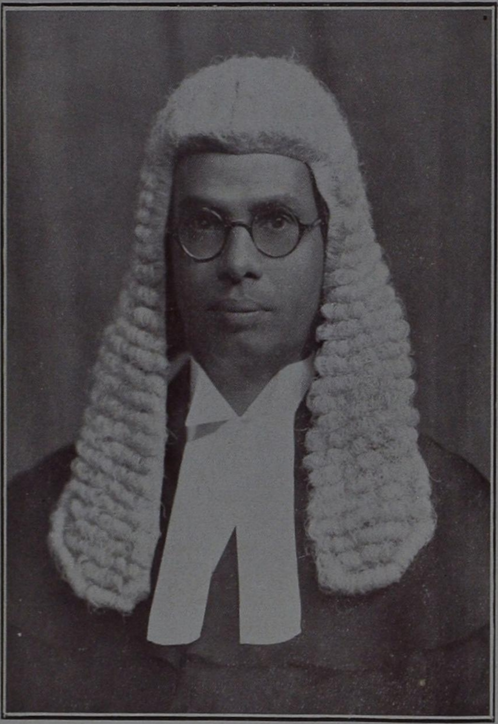


HON'BLE

SIR. R. K. SHUNMUKHAM CHETTI, K.C.I.E.

The Budget debate had lasted for full two days and nearly forty members had partaken in it. It was indeed a 'very interesting one' except for the absence of the scathing but scholarly criticism of Mr. R. K. Shunmukham, who was by accident in the chair. This was no small a blessing to Sir George Schuster who, with a smile irrepressible and a sigh of relief prefaced his reply: "One might be thankful for small mercies, still more for a great one." A splendid tribute this was and its value is infinitely enhanced in view of its source—the Treasury Bench.

Lord Macaulay is said to have exclaimed "I am nothing, if not historical." As well might Mr. Chetti remark "I am nothing, if not a financier." This is certainly not to say that his excellences are merely 'economic.' But he treads a solid ground and a congenial ground at that when he deals with economics; he is in his elements only in economics. The confidence and cock-sureness with which Mr. Chetti criticises the financial policy of the Government cannot but remind us of Gokhale. After that great man, there have no doubt been some able financiers; but no one other than Mr. Chetti seems to anything like approach him in his marvellous grasp of details and masterly method of criticism. If Gokhale could make a Finance Member

spend many an anxious night and dream unpleasant dreams on the eve of the budget debates, Mr. Shunmukham also can lash into rapt attention a half-dozing Finance Member who would, with note and pencil in hand, perturbedly lean forward and listen to his trenchant criticisms with evident embarrassment. To be spared this embarrassment is no small a mercy and the tribute of Sir George was no less spontaneous !

The Presidentship of the Legislative Assembly is a place of honour ; Mr. Chetti's elevation to it is indeed a victory, but certainly not the best. Crowned though he is with a wig, it is not the Crowning of his life. The grey-haired wig is the glorious precursor of the golden diadem to come. The Deputy Presidentship of the Assembly like the Vice-Presidency of America, is an office which is sometimes reserved as consolation prize for men of high claims. But the Presidentship in both the countries is a veritable glittering prize that invariably goes to those who have not merely 'stout hearts and sharp swords' but sound brains and judgment.

Uneasy lies as well the head that wears the wig ; the demand on its resources and energy would make even a mighty brain collapse. I cannot help feeling that the grey-haired wig itself lies rather uneasy over Mr. Chetti's head : for it feels its present tenant far too small in comparison with its predecessors. But time shall soon teach the wig that Mr. Shunmukham's head is as sharp as it is small and that grey hair alone does not make a great man nor a heavy head a hero. Mr. Chetti is exceptionally rich in his armoury of ready wit and rare

judgment. Making history from the Chair is as much the privilege of Mr. Shunmukham as it was of Patel. Surely President Chetti sounds as grand as President Patel. And when Mr. Chetti lays down his dignified office, well might he sing with Milton's Angel "Now my task is smoothly done, I can fly or I can run." His task would have been done not merely smoothly but splendidly and he could surely fly (not sail) to Geneva once again or run by train to his city in the South.

There are some men who thrust themselves into politics and others upon whom politics is thrust. Mr. R. K. Shunmukham belongs to neither of these two kinds. Though politics is not his 'family trade,' yet none seems to have been born with a greater right to the heritage of high politics, than Mr. Chetti. As yet a child, nor yet a fool to fame, Mr. Chetti lisped in politics as politics came. With a steadfast gaze fixed, not at the academic distinctions but on the glittering prizes of politics, and trained and disciplined for politics with an assiduity that reminds one of Pitt the younger, Mr. R. K. Shunmukham had a natural, almost effortless transition from his college life into the political arena. And wealth, an overwhelmingly important factor, facilitated his debut as it has not done to many. At the early age of twenty-six Mr. Shunmukham entered the Madras Council and was baptised in the beneficial politics of the Justice Party. As a secretary to one of the ministers for some time, and as a member of the Council, Mr. Chetti was unmistakably sowing the seeds of future fame.

"The spirit of youth,

That means to be of note, begins betimes."

Mr. Chetti's real place is not the Provincial Legislature. He was born for a bigger forum. The dizzy heights of the Delhi Legislature and the more dazzling prizes that were possible in that Parliament attracted him towards it. With a dauntless courage and exhaustless resource which so well characterised that wonderful F. E. Smith, Mr. R. K. Shunmukham enlisted himself in that indomitable army of the Swarajist Opppsition so ably manned and so tactfully headed by Pandit Motilal Nehru. Motilalji played the Joseph Chamberlain to this young Smith. He was not merely admired by that great man, he always found a soft corner in his capaciously warm heart.

Mr. Shunmukham is one of the very few successful debaters in India who are noted for the skilful use of their dialectical talents in their political battles. I am afraid Mr. Chetti is not very fond of purple patches and mouth-filling rodomontades. As a Journalist put it, Mr. Chetti always conveys the maximum of ideas in the minimum of words. Few can help writhing under the terrible lashes of his tongue. He gets self-saturated with his theme and hence wields an enormous power in the Assembly and on the platform. His sense of language is sound and masculine and his feeling for form hardly rivalled by any. He will wear his adversaries down by his tireless attack, by the intensity of feeling and the versatility of proof. An 'Orator' in its best sense Mr.

Chetti is not; but as a vehement debater few can rival him.

Mr. Chetti is no mere respector of persons. He does not give quarter to a pretender, never spares a cheat. He generally assumes the Napoleanic portentousness and with a lofty disdain, skips over the pebbles of envy and dislike that might lie strewn on his imperious route. He would laugh within himself and perchance with his confidential friends, at the feeble efforts that some pitiable ignoramasses and political mountebanks might make to blow down his fortress of fame by the impotent gale of their faint whispers. But he is not an angel of patience or tolerance incarnate. When the rabbits become too intolerable, the lion would flare up with mighty rage and would cut the poor things into shreds or powder them to pieces. Ablaze with the Curzonian feeling of unforgiving vengeance, Mr. Chetti would hunt after his opponent and drive him out of his hemisphere. Even if that opponent were clothed with brief authority like the then Deputy Leader of his party, Mr. S. Sreenivasa Iyengar, he would not spare him. Mr. Shunmukham is essentially a peace-loving politician but always armed to the teeth and when war becomes inevitable or when it lies on his way, he would fight with gallantry.

When a genius is made, they say, nature breaks its mould. And it would be a vain attempt to bring Mr. Chetti under any of the categories of politicians we know. Among the many things he is noted for, strict conformity to party principles is not one. To know the views of his party on a question is not always to be sure

of his own opinion. If Mr. Chetti belongs to a party, it is not because he loves it, nor because he finds it a mirror of his own mind. He is more *in* a party than *of* it. Party is a necessary evil and one must be thankful that he condescends to give it at least that cold, formal recognition. He is restive and impatient within the bounds set by party discipline and oftener than not he bursts out of them. Hence the paradox of Mr. Shunmukham's politics. It is rather mystifying that he is a nationalist in the Justice Party and a Justicite while in the nationalist party. But he is as sincere as any that has donned the 'Gandhi Cap' to emancipate India! Where then lies the key to his politics? The key lies in the ill-developed or insufficiently developed party system in India. Mr. Chetti hates monopoly of every kind and nature. To strike at its root is his aim, his policy and his governing passion. But he finds before him the unhappy choice between parties either of which, if opposed to monopoly of one kind, is conniving at the monopoly of a different nature. To accept this unsatisfactory state of affairs and to merge himself into a party and lose his personality is simply revolting to the independent nature of this stalwart of self-respect. This fact accounts sufficiently for the courage with which he broke all conventions and boldly avowed his Communalism at a time when he was in the Swarajist party. In the course of a speech in the Gokhale Hall he remarked "I am a Communalist and I am not ashamed to call myself a Communalist. For I know that Communalism alone paves the way for and builds true nationalism." He openly hates those nationalists who are political extremists and social

reactionaries. "Enter democracy, Exit Caste should be the motto of every Indian nationalist" he says—a definition which would exclude many from membership of his party. Yet he continues to be in a party for in some party he must be. It no doubt sounded the other day a fine though conventional sentiment when he disavowed his association with any party in the Assembly. But it meant absolutely no mental exertion for him. The fact is, he had never been of any party. Like Winston Churchill but with none of his childish waywardness and frieks, Mr. Chetti has his party where-ever he is.

If party loyalty is powerless over his polities, public opinion has much less influence over him. The storm of popular opinion might rage fiercely around him but it never touches his opinions which lie entrenched in the impenetrable fortress of his mind. He does not swim along the popular current to the slippery shore of cheap fame. He not merely differs from the public but at times defies it with a courage that is quite natural to him. He is never led by the people into opinions but he boldly leads them towards light and learning like the ideal leader after Burke's own mind. And whenever he differs from the public, he is invariably in the right. Mr. Chetti had just then returned from Geneva and also England where he had had a personal talk with Mr. Wedgewood Benn, the then Secretary of State for India and had come with the joyous message of good will from the latter to our Country. A function was arranged in his honour and he spoke at length about

the sincerity of the Labour Government and also incidentally about the lack of representative Indians who could negotiate with Britain on India's behalf, with authority. But a sentimental member in the audience flung out the name of Mahatma Gandhi as India's unquestioned mouthpiece. Mr. Chetti grew animated and assuming an attitude of challenge and in a clear ringing tone cried out "The moment, the moment Gandhi leaves the shores of India and concludes a treaty he will be repudiated by many." Such a challenge had been never before made by a politician, much less in words so plain and to an audience who prided in the very mention of Gandhi's name! It was flung as a tremendous surprise and a shock went through the audience. But who does not know that his prophetic words have been borne out by subsequent events? Confessing his failure at the Round Table Conference, Gandhiji fell back upon his usual methods which are anything but a constitutional treaty-making.

The spheres of Mr. Shunmakham Chetti's activities have been expanding and increasing with every year like concentric circles. The enviable privilege of representing India in International Conferences has fallen five times to his lot and there is none but feels that he deserves it all. He has made a name for himself in Australia by virtue of his outstanding ability. His was not merely to adorn the chair with a gold-laced turban or chime a few sanskrit slogas specially composed but to surprise the representatives of proud, free nations with the intellectual calibre of

India's sons. And in this task Mr. Chetti acquitted himself most admirably. 'If we are fit to die side by side with you, we are also fit to live side by side with you' rang forth the stentorian voice of this valiant son of India and none could miss its logic. At the Geneva International Labour Conference Mr. Chetti has played the part of the adviser to the Employers' delegation twice, and with distinction. And his latest seems not the least remarkable of his achievements outside India. At the Ottawa Conference Mr. Chetti, along with his colleagues (one of the best-informed delegations) placed India's case with rare courage and cleverness and affixed his signature to the Agreement on behalf of three hundred and fifty millions of his follow countrymen. India could never have had a better bargain, boasted this born-bargainer and he expected to be thanked by his countrymen. But he had to face the music of a hostile Assembly. The Assembly was opposed to the Agreement, the country itself began to repudiate his and his colleagues' right to pledge away India's rights for some doubtful privileges. But Mr. Chetti was not to be daunted by this. Marshalling his powers of debating and persuation, Mr. Chetti threw himself into the himalayan task of winning over to his opinion a very adverse house. One man with a conviction will overwhelm a hundred who have only opinions and Mr. R. K. Shunmukham burst into the fray with a conviction so clear, so decisive, so burning that opposition was soon stampeded. The vague and borrowed opinions with which most of the members confronted him flew away like autumn leaves before the storm of his convin-

cing arguments. At last the Assembly approved of the Ottawa Agreement and Mr. Shunmukham's was the largest share in that triumph !

When the Justice Party was on the verge of shipwreck at Tanjore, many were the eyes that turned towards Coimbatore for the succour of his saving hands ! This 'man of the hour' would have been made the monarch for the mere asking. But with a remarkable disdain for such petty squabbles, he kept himself far from the madding crowd. And he acted wisely. What a climb-down for this Olympian would it have been, had he only listened to the voice of vanity or the prayers of some people ! Rightly has he chosen to give unto the country what was meant for it, without wasting it away in the eddies of provincial politics. He always hunts in the King's forests and he always bags big game !

In India, politicians are either demagogues and popular idols or the favourites and prize-boys of the Bureaucracy. Mr. Chetti is neither of these but he maintains a balance with marvellous ability between the popularity amongst the masses on the one hand and the favour of the Powers-that-be on the other. He pleases both without offending either. He as much disdains to throw out sweet baits to the credulous public for its clamorous idolatry as he loathes to play into the hands of the Government or betray the country'a interests for a mess of pottage or a medal of Kaisari-hind. "The sight of his name, the sound of his voice are refreshing to us." (The conferment of the title of K.C.I.E. is but a fitting tribute to his greatness by the Government.

It is a Kohinoor on his glittering crown of eminence. The title itself has become popular since it embraced the most popular celebrity.) Coupled with his cherished name, the title has the widest currency in the world to-day. There is hardly a man in the street who lisps not the title with his lovely name combined.

At the early age of forty Mr. Chetti occupies a position and enjoys a distinction with which it may not be possibie for many even to end their career. When we know that at that age even in a country like England Bonar Law had not held office, and Mr. Baldwin was unknown, that in Germany Von Hindenberg was absolutely unimportant and that in America Abraham Lincoln was equally a stranger to fame, one cannot but be astonished at the spectacle of an Indian occupying the Speaker's Chair of India's Parliament at the age of forty! At this age Mr. Shunmukham can look back upon his eventful life of a decade and a half which would provide material for half a dozen normal lives which can very well find a place in the Dictionary of National Biographies. He can look back on volumes of speeches and debates which would do honour to a Churchill or Birkenhead, on a library of books which would not do injustice to a life spent in literature and on five international conferences and the record of work therein that would place him side by side with a Lord Cecil.

Froude's "Life of Disraeli" fired the Earl of Birkenhead with a lofty ambition "to reproduce his (Disraeli's) career." But unfortunately Birkenhead could not become Beaconsfield. And I cannot help

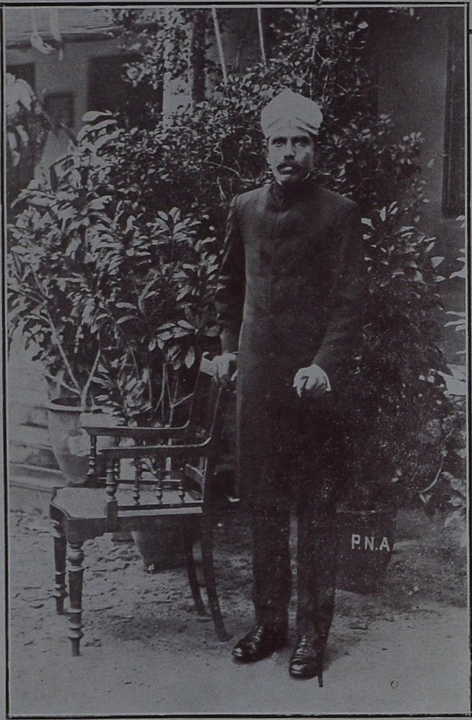
feeling that Mr. Chetti, the Indian edition of the Earl of Birkenhead is equally ambitious to reproduce the career of Gladstone, the rival of Birkenhead's model. No better proof of his ambition is needed than the nomenclature of Mr. Chetti's residence which reminds us of the "Hawarden" castle of that great British Statesman. The parallel between their lives is no less flattering to Mr. Chetti Both of them entered their respective legislatures at the earliest age on record; both of them are great scholars and excellent debators. If Gladstone began his career with the blessings and love of the Tories in England, Mr. Chetti began his with the unstinted and spontaneous admiration of the justicites. The parallel vicissitudes in their party loyalties are equally striking. If Gladstone ended as a great Liberal Stateman, Mr. Shunmukham also will end as an equally great 'Liberal' in the Indian sense of that word. But there is one great difference that creates a wide gulf between the two. Mr. Chetti is entirely lacking in that deep and profound spiritualism which went so magnificently to saturate the principles and politics of that eminent English Statesman. Mr. Shunmukham is entirely of this world, of the earth earthy. Religion according to him should have a separate sphere, if ever it should be tolerated to meddle with existence. It should not dabble in politics to the latter's detriment. He is not gifted with a divine vision of the eternal, nor is he impelled by a vague desire to "wing our green to wed our blue." God, whether He exists or not, should not tax the human brain, or deprive the human race of its precious time. He sternly refuses to navigate into the

deep waters of eternity, if only because he can better spend that time in analysing the Budget or enjoying a garden party or in purchasing some shares in a profitable concern. His burning ambition is to use his talents to the best advantage of himself and his countrymen.

Mr. Chetti would certainly plead guilty to the charge of 'worldliness.' But he seems to be proud of his own philosophy which is almost identical with that of W. J. Potter who says: "It has been well said that there is a sin of other-worldliness no less than a sin of worldliness People have been taught so much about preparing for Heaven that they have sometimes become very indifferent workers on earth, and in anticipating the joys of the future world have overlooked the infinite possibilities for good in the world that now is." Nevertheless, Mr. Chetti is miles away from Gladstone in this respect and I am left wondering if he could ever reproduce the career of the latter in its entirety!

To-day, crowning his period of youth with a grey-haired wig and with the fertile though dangerous 'forties'. before him yet to be navigated, Mr. R. K. Shunmukham in the speaker's chair keeps the balance even between youth and age. He is a factor of supreme importance to be reckoned with hereafter in the future more than in the past. He occupies to-day with distinction and ability the seat of the Assembly's President. And such is his intellect, experience and superiority that I see no reason why Mr. Chetti should not occupy the Treasury Bench of the coming Federal Assembly with equally

great distinction. With a past so glorious and fertile of achievements Mr. Chetti does possess a future which is the most interesting speculation in Indian politics.


P.N.A

DEWAN BAHADUR

A. RAMASWAMI MUDALIAR

A dark, medium-sized figure, tip-toe in a blue tweed suit, with a gold-laced turban crowning the head and a gleaming red 'Namam' adorning the fore-head; a cane hanging down from the left arm, while the right palm holds closing the left palm, his frame now swinging to the right and now to the left with the head held at a tangent—all the time the silver tongue amazingly weaving its enchantment—this is the picture of Mr. A. Ramasami Mudaliar on any platform. The dark-haired eyebrows with shining, deep-set eyes and the black and full-grown moustache roofing over his lips constitute a feature that is peculiarly his own.

It was as a speaker that Mr. Mudaliar came to be recognised and it is as the same that he will ever be remembered. He is an orator first and an orator last. The exuberance of his verbosity inebriates his hearers. He bathes his audiences with the Niagara of eloquance of never-ending flow. Though occasionally, as of late in the Assembly, he orates like 'a bull in a brass shop,' he generally pitches the key in a moderate but musical tone and pours forth his periods of perfect finish. Occasionally he raises his voice or often enough lowers his tone, to emphasise a word or impress a phrase and thus a wonderful effect is produced on the audience. Once he is on his legs words and phrases flash out with

the rapidity of lightning and forge themselves into periods. He is never at a loss for a word. "Thousands at his bidding speed, and post over land and Ocean, without rest." Not only does he think as he speaks but also he speaks faster than he thinks. There are speakers like J. M. Keynes who have "to race to keep up with their thoughts." They think at a greater speed than they speak. But the contrary is the case with Mr. Mudaliar. It will be more correct to say that his words guide his thoughts and ideas than to say that his ideas and thoughts draw forth his words. It is not uncommon with him that a phrase or a train of words that may accidentally drop from his lips should drag him out of the track and make him dwell on a new topic altogether. But this parenthetical lapse is as brief as it is interesting. The next minute he will recoup himself and majestically stride the main path. Yet not many can perceive this.

His is an ornate style of the mid-victorian era, full of balance and abounding in antithesis. Purple-patches and telling phrases beautify his style. Illustrations of infinite variety no less than apt quotations and adaptations enrich his style and enliven it. He is the idol of the audience wherever he goes and he is greeted and acclaimed with thundering cheers. He keeps the audience spell-bound for hours by feasting their ears with his "mouth-filling rodomontades." He works upon their feelings with a wonderful facility. He sends them into deliriums of joy with as much ease as into moods of mute wonderment. Suddenly he makes a happy turn of a phrase or hits subtly at an individual and you hear

the shrill peal of laughter as if a brittle glass were dropped on a piece of rock. Mr. Mudaliar's vocabulary of words reminds us of the Prussian army of Frederick William. The former's passion for high-sounding words can be matched only by the latter's mania for tall-fighting men. But whereas William's Patagonians were innocent of even a sham skirmish, Mr. Mudaliar has fought and won many a Waterloo with his mighty words.

Till very lately it was almost impossible to think of Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar without thinking of the Justice Party. None else had proved a greater strenght to the Party and none else had derived greater strength from it than Mr. Mudaliar. His political career had been unmistakably identified with the career of the Justice Party. He had grown with its growth and fallen with its fall. His person and life bore an indelible though indefinable impress of a typical Justicite. If he expounded the tenets of the Party with Gladstonian authority, he espoused its interests with Hampden-like vigilance. Wherever he went he breathed the 'Justice' atmosphere. Every word of Mr. Mudaliar emitted the 'Justice' odour, every opinion of his was clothed in its complexion. Whenever he occasionally gave his individual opinion, it was unconsciously felt that he was speaking for the Party. He could neither speak nor write except as the mouthpiece of the Justice Party. He was its accredited agent with a blank cheque of opinion. He had an inherent right to fill it up and use and it hardly happened that

he went wrong. He was as much proud of the Justice Party after its disastrous defeat in 1926 as he had been in the palmy days of Panagal ministry. Whether in the Legislative Council or in the Legislative Assembly, whether in the Council of State or at the Round Table Conference, Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar has always proclaimed himself to be a 'Justicite'. If success greeted the Party he swelled with joy and elation, if failure marred its progress he shrank with shame and horror. While numberless politicians whom the Justice Party has saved from the 'Dunciad' immortality has proved unworthy and ungrateful to it, it was Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar alone who openly avowed his indebtedness to it: "I had not a single platform to express my views and it was through that Association (S. I. L. F.) that I have had opportunities of addressing on various platforms."

When the young and ambitious Woodrow Wilson was asked about the profession he would choose, he is said to have replied "I will choose the profession of Law for the vocation of politics." A more appropriate reply Mr. Mudaliar could hardly have made. Soon after he was called to the Bar he was engrafted into politics. Whether or not he was well advised in transferring his loyalty from the Muse of Law to the Muse of Politics, is a profitless speculation. With his innate genius for flooring his opponents and with his wonderfully facile tongue, Mr. Mudaliar seems to have been in politics to the 'manner born'. An irresistible ambition, strengthened and sustained by an extraordinary power of speech

naturally lured him into politics. Soon Mr. Mudaliar harboured himself in the capacious heart of that white-robed saint of Madras. The rapturous rally of Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar under the banner of Sir Thyagaroya reminds us of the historic meeting of the young F. E. Smith with Joseph Chamberlain. Gifted with a tall and towering personality and commanding an imposing appearance both Mr. Chamberlain and Thyagaroya held their sway in their respective countries. The audacity and courage which would not suffer Chamberlain unsay a word he had spoken or confess a mistake he had committed can be matched only by the independence and pertinacity which made Sir P. T. Chetty repeat his strong opinion about the political prisoners. Even so did the proteges themselves agree in many respects. Ramaswami Mudaliar was to the Justice Party what F. E. Smith was to the conservatives. By virtue of their dazzling eloquance and debating skill each of them saved his respective party and sustained it through. It must indeed have been a situation full of humour when Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar solemnly met Birkenhead at White Hall and urged on the latter the necessity of granting provincial autonomy forthwith to Madras.

Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar made his debut into the Madras Council as an elected member for Chingleput in 1920. For the second Council too he was re-elected. It was then that his services were most requisitioned and best realised. During the first ministry the activities of Mr. Mudaliar had been very much in evidence outside the Council. In elaborate defence of the Party's

actions and in eloquent propagation of its principles none had done anything like Mr. Mudaliar. But the second Council was more exacting to him. With the Swarajist Party consisting of such vociferous and virulent sabre-rattlers as Mr. Satyamurthi in the opposition and with the disgruntled but daring elements like Mr. C. R. Reddy definitely arrayed on the side of the opponents, it was indeed a very hard and trying time for the Justice ministry. The tremendous task of crossing swords with such trained and skilled debaters bent on discrediting the Party and of silencing and scoring against them fell to the lot mainly of Mr. Mudaliar. And an intellectual gladiator that Mr. Mudaliar is, boldly did he stand on the battlements of the Treasury Bench and ceaselessly did he discharge the volleys of his destructive eloquence at the snarling faces of the Swarajist army.

Thus surfeiting with power for six long years the Justice Party became enervated at last. The country too perhaps desired for a change in the regime. Thus came the catastrophe at the polls in 1926. The Party fell from power and along with it fell Mr. Mudaliar too. The defeat was an eye-opener to the Party: it taught the Justicites a lesson. From the Rajah Saheb of Panagal right down to the itinerant propagandist every one was awakened from a long sleep of security. They clamoured for a thorough reorganisation. The Justice Party must be set in order; it must be infused with more confidence and vitality. Who could to this effectively and how best could it be done? This was

the question that every one asked and there was no doubt regarding its answer. "Mr. A. R. alone could do that stupendous task and it could be done through the Party organ alone" was the answer that automatically found expression in all quarters in the Party. Well might have boasted this Chatham : "I and I alone can save the Justice Party and nobody else can." And save the Party he certainly did. From the time of the assumption of the editorial chair by Mr. A. R. dates the period of preparation of the Party for the acceptance of future responsibilties and power. The popularity of the paper 'Justice' rose by leaps and bounds. Its circulation soared high, suddenly and swiftly. Friends were delighted by the defence of the Party and foes were tickled by the herculean labour spent in denouncing them. And both flocked alike to feast on the luscious contents of the leading articles of 'Justice'. Thus when this magician had wielded the magic wand of his mighty pen for some time, the entire situation underwent a change. The paper became a power in the Land : a tower of srength to the Party and a terror to its foes. The drooping spirits of the Party men and their deadly feeling of despondency soon gave place to feelings of courage and optimism. Mr. Mudaliar was at his best in the Press and on the platform. As a weapon, offensive and defensive the 'Justice' was wielded with such skill and strength as no other party organ has ever been. The swarajists in general and the monopolists in particular were the main butt of his ridicule and satire. The least attack against the Justice Party by cowardly insinuations or by haughty affronts

was sure to invite on the hapless head of the assailant a Niagara of ridicule which would submerge and swallow him. The insolence born of inebriating power which spoke of "My Government of which Lord Goschen is the Chief" was chased and chastised by a volley of virulent editorial missiles. The communal mind that sought to spit out its venom under the convenient cloak of an academic discourse was ruthlessly exposed and lacerated into disappearance. From the pettiest official to My Lord Goschen, from the meanest Swarajist to Mahatma Gandhi no one, who dared to insult the Justice Party could escape his eloquent stings and editorial stabs.

Mr. Ramaswamy Mudaliar has been always fond of calling himself the drummerboy of the Justice Party. If to be a drummerboy is to be in the company of Lloyd George, hardly need he feel ashamed of that description. He used to beat the drum boisterously and aloud and beckoned the rank and file to do battle for the Party. And in all those battles he was invariably in the vanguard. The martial music of the measured beat of his magic drum heartened his hearers and made them march hilariously to the field. The dauntless drummerboy has never been content to confine his activities merely to skirmishes of provincial politics. His ambitious dreams of conquest have carried him farther and farther until the magnificent walls of the St. James' Palace reverberated with the music of his drums and the mighty Statesmen of Britain have marvelled at his skill. With the fervent loyalty of an Englishman for the Union Jack, Mr. Ramaswami

Mudaliar has carried the Justice Flag to the Everest of Simla and planted it there to the beat of his drum and the flow of his eloquence!

Twice did the citizens of Madras give him the supreme gift in their power—the Mayoralty. And he did the Corporation a return in the shape of a Convention in the matter of electing the Mayor every year. Apart from its intrinsic merit (of late, there has been a good deal of adverse comment on it) Mr. Mudaliar must be thanked for his pains and perseverence in corresponding with and studying the local government institutions in Great Britain. His tenure of office was not uneventful, otherwise too. Quite a huge sensation was created in the city by his alleged attitude towards some of the City Fathers during the Simon Commission, visit to Madras. One of the most unedifying scenes was created in the meeting by the disgruntled elements and perfect pandemonium prevailed. For once the eloquent voice of the President was muffled and drowned in the fearful lava of the volcanic fury of the opponents. Hence he appealed to the citizens direct. Millions of Madrasis thronged to hear the 'President speak', That was one of the biggest mammath meetings that the city has seen. And it was a first class Marathan speech that Mr. Mudaliar made on that occasion. As a piece of rhetoric it was unrivalled. It was worthy of Demosthenes himself or of a Cicero. Sublime purple patches, flights of eloquence, Antonian irony, killing sarcasm, cogent reasoning and a hundred other tricks of rhetoric abounded in that speech. Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar

has made many speeches in his life and most of them are marvels and models of eloquence. Yet he will always be remembered mostly by this speech.

The personality of Mr. Mudaliar is neither magnetic nor imperious. You do not feel that you are in the presence of a conquering personality like that of Panagal. But you do feel that you are in the presence of a mighty intellect, rigid and cold, inspiring you with awe and admiration rather than engendering love and affection. Though physically beside him, you feel you are not in the vicinity of his heart. An unconscionably long latitute separates you from him. No infectious smile, no gleeful laughter greets you when you meet him. No word of endearment enthrals your mind, no hail-fellow-well-met look heartens you to approach him. Quite a formal greeting or a cold nod of his head questioningly points to a seat beside, half indicating his annoyance at your unseasoned intrusion. He dives straight into the business and except very rarely, disposes of you with a deep sigh of relief. The portals of his capacious mind are not flung open for you to examine with curiosity and comment with freedom on the precious contents of its pigeon-holes. Alert and vigilant like a student at the *vivo voce* examination, Mr. Mudaliar is always with his ready answers and reasoned replies at his fingers' ends. He is cold and formal like a Blue Book. He speaks and listens to you in the fullest consciousness of his superiority over you. If ever he loves humanity it is only in the abstract.

"The political mind has many manifestations. It may be philosophical with Lord Balfour, an exercise in strategy with Mr. Lloyd George, a passion for order and constitutional form of Government with Lord Oxford, a secular instrument of religious orthodoxy with Lord Hugh Cecil or a lively adventure with Lord Birkenhead and Mr. Churchill." It is rather difficult to decide under which of these categories Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar comes. But if one were compelled to bring him under some head, one could bracket him only with Lord Birkenhead. For Ramaswami Mudaliar is an adventurer in politics in the same sense in which such distinguished persons as Disraeli, J. H. Thomas and Birkenhead are said to have been.

At Toranto Mr. Mudaliar was much admired and appreciated for his ease and mastery over the English language. He was interviewed by correspondents of eminent papers of Canada on a variety of subjects on India. He impressed them all very much by his ready wit and rare judgment on men and matters. He explained to them the nature and spread of English Journalism in India and incidentally he reminded them that he himself is the Editor-in-chief of an eminent paper in South India. He grew ecstatic over the virtues of democracy and sang its praise unceasingly. Ever since that time he has been untiring in his blatant worship of democracy. Yet Mr. Mudaliar's is no maudlin sentimentalism as that of President Wilson of America. Despite all his loud and lyrical singing of democracy's praise, Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar entertains no very high opinion about

its capacity. Like the late M. Briand of France Mr. Mudaliar feels within his heart that democracy is "a petulent and irrational child that must be manoeuvered unknowingly into reasonable courses." He is fully conscious of the capacity of his eloquence to capture men's hearts. He has unlimited confidence in his powers of persuation and his own nimble genius for the manipulation of men and occasions. Mr. Mudaliar respects the principle but always pursues the attainable. All the time he is blatantly speaking of ideals and goals, he is equally firmly planting his feet on the terra firma. He hardly suffers himself to be swept off his feet by ideals and he never soars into the ethereal regions of emptiness.

If Doctor Johnson's definition of a genius should be accepted, Mr. Ramaswami Mudaliar is undoubtedly a genius. He has "an infinite capacity to take pains." He works hard, reads much, and reads on almost every conceivable subject. He has a well-furnished library and he uses it to the best advantage. His performances in the Legislative Assembly bespeak a profound knowledge on such a baffling variety of subjects. He treats such technical and dry questions as the Army budget and the Frontier problem with as much of ease and facility as he dilates on such homely topics as communal representation in services and the grievances of Railway passengers. Constitutional Law he has mastered so well that unstinted praise was bestowed on him by Lord Sankey who was immensely struck with Mr. "Mew-da-liar's" marvellous capacity. His activities

at the Federal Structure Sub-Committee will always be considered as the brightest feather in his cap His work in the Lothian Franchise Committee has won for him golden opinions from Lord Lothian. Nor is his knowledge of Economics less profound. Mr. Mudaliar has been of late filling the gap in the Opposition Benches left by Sir Shunmukham. His criticisms of the Assembly budget have always been well-informed, weighty and at times quite unanswerable. He caused no little anxiety to Sir George Schuster who always took special pains to meet the points of criticism raised by Mr. Mudaliar. He is always preparing himself for the fray, both within the Assembly and without it. In point of intellectual agility and skill Mr. Mudaliar is an indispensable factor in party warfares.

The Justice Party in the Madras Council lost a first rate debater in Mr. R. K. Shunmukham and an eminent orator in Mr. Mudaliar when each of them respectively transferred his forum to the Legislative Assembly. They are, nevertheless the biggest shares subscribed by Madras to the Partnership business of India's Parliament. The achievements of Sir Shunmukham enthral the Non-Brahmins and the activities of Mr. Mudaliar argue our Party's Credit. Together they demonstrate the calibre of the Tamil genius.

Over Conferences he has presided and in Committees he has served; but office Mr. Mudaliar has never held. The 'drummer boy' has never been put in command! Though swift-footed like Atalanta, Mr.

Mudaliar has been far outrun in the race by many a slow-footed pigmy in politics. Accoutred and sabre-rattling though he has always been, it has never been given to him to win official lawrels. A decade and a half has passed since his debut into politics; yet no pleasant oasis of a place in the Treasury Bench has relieved the monotony of that dry and dreary desert. No doubt the Round Tabable Conference, the Age of Consent Committee, the Toranto Conference, etc., stand to his political credit. Nevertheless one cannot but be struck by the official sterility of his otherwise brilliant career. Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar has so far never got his deserts, much less what he desires. That has been the tragady of his life, if any. Lesser beings than he have waded through plenty and wielded power well. Greater men than himself have spurned at office and yet surfeited with glory. But Dewan Bahadur Ramaswami Mudaliar stands by himself, enjoying the unique but unenviable renown which is neither the ordinary glare of official power nor the super-official sublimity of the Shastri type. It is a great puzzle indeed, it is a perplexing problem to us. What could be the key to this puzzle ?

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P.N.A.

KUMARARAJAH M. A. MUTHIA CHETTIAR OF CHETTINAD.

Celebrated parentage is certainly a blessing but by no means an unmixed one for all. It can prove a good fortune to some and a misfortune to others. A Winston Churchill is fortunate in his father but an Austen Chamberlain is unfortunate in his. It is so because unless the son is equally clever, if not cleverer than the father, he is apt to be eclipsed by the latter. Sir Austen Chamberlain was born under the shadow of a great name and he never emerged out from it. But Mr. Muthia Chettiar is fortunate, though he too was born under the shadow of his illustrious father Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar. It is a good thing to hold the coat-tails of a great father and be ushered into the world, provided one does not continue for ever to walk in the former's shadow. The Kumararajah was introduced by his father into the political world but he was never eclipsed by the latter. He has emerged out of the shadow and has proved his mettle.

Armed to the teeth, and accoutred well, perched on the saddle, booted and spurred, the Kumararajah commenced his race to the beat of drums and the blow of bugles. But there ended his extraneous help. Once mounted, he would never dismount. The pioneer of his community to dive into active politics, he is fast

exploring fresh fields and pastures new. It is with the gusto and gallantry of a Hotspur that he dashes on his steed. He strides the fields with marvellous speed and meteoric splendour. A bayonet thrust here and a sword hit there he deals and takes with delight and with ever increasing thirst for laurels endlessly rides on. To change the figure, he wanders like Alice in the wonderland of politics and grows more and more curious.

The Kumararajah hails from a community which has a fanatic faith in the might of Mammon. They worship the golden calf with a zeal only equalled by their zeal for temple building. All their lives they would spend in accumulating wealth with a jew-like exactitude and at the end they would recklessly lavish it in reviving old temples and raising new ones. They are a charitable race who forget their soul in the first half of their life to seek its salvation in the second half. Their generosity bleeds the debtors to build up temple stones. In their fanatic zeal for temple-building they have adopted an inverted scale of human values. But all these traditions were brushed aside with a lofty contempt by Rajah Sir Annamalai Chettiar's family which strayed from the beaten track and struck a new path. The Rajah was aghast at the misplaced munificence of his tribe. He would fain spend lakhs of rupees over a temple. But let it not be a temple where the shrieks of bats and the peals of the bells sing a chorus for a stone. Let it be a Temple where the Goddess of Learning would be enthroned with the blazing torch of culture held aloft in

Her hand whence countless souls shall get illumined and enlightened to their eternal bliss. Thus in the establishment of the Annamalai University the God of Mammon came to be pressed into the service of the Goddess of Learning for the first time in their community. It was the happiness of the human beings and not the height of the temple-tower that was sought to be enhanced. In keeping with such magnanimous tradition set up by his noble father the Kumararajah leapt into the political arena at a very early age.

Want of discipline and wasteful living usually characterise the young colts of aristocratic breed in our country. Rolling in the lap of luxury and draining the cup of pleasure, the impetuous young men forget themselves and forget their country in their feverish pursuit after the fleeting pleasures of their flesh. How refreshing therefore, how very encouraging it is to turn from this repulsive picture of rapturous sensuality to that of Kumararajah of Chettinad who has voluntarily enlisted in the service of his fellowmen with a willing and meek submission to the discipline and rigours of a dedicated life! After the completion of his academic career he commenced has political career as a matter of course. At the early age of twenty-five he came to occupy many a post of responsibility and honour in the business world. Membership of the Legislative Council came to him naturally enough. He has served in a number of committees and has thus gained immense experience in administration. He became a member of the Madras Corporation and has

since been elected twice as its President—the first one to be honourned with the newly-won appellation of Mayor.

No youth could have helped being enraptured by the magnificent picture that was presented to his eyes on the occasion of the Mayoral welcome to the new Assembly President. The thin, tall and exquisitely dressed figure of Mr. R. K. Shunmukham and the equally tall but the robust and well built figure of the Kumararajah, glowing in his Mayroal robe of black hue and bordered gold, epitomised in themselves the excellence of Madras youth. It was a picture that showed the high-water-mark of the glory of youth. It was a picture of one youthful victor extending a laurel to another victor—just returned from the Olympic with the full flush of victory fresh on his face. No wonder then that Mr. Chetti almost blushed and restrained his tongue lest they should from a mutual admiration society.

He is full of energy and ambition. He is enthusiastic and eager—eager to learn and eager to do big things. He spares no pains to equip himself with everything that would make a successful politician. No one who has seen him at the beginning can help being struck by the tremendous progress he has made. He personifies energy and embodies improvement. He is restless and active, always thinking and always moving. He has been fixed with responsibility from the very outset of his career. The discipline and training that he undergoes in the discharge of it would shape and reshape him into the ideal politician after his own heart. The Kumararajah

is entitled to our attention not so much by his past achievements, which are not many, as by the glorious future which he so well promises to carve out for himself.

It is true that the Kumararajah is not an eloquent speaker. He has never made a Philippic either within the council or without it. Nor has he electrified the imagination of the public by any masterly stroke of statesmanship or by a mystifying phrase. But he speaks with feeling and force. He suffers from a rather rapid utterance with occasional faltering but he as readily recovers from it and rushes on. The earnest effort of his swift-moving mind to seek effective expression through his rather untrained-tongue is visible in every word he utters. But no one can doubt that wit hin a very short time he would succeed in establishing a wonderful union with his mind and tongue. He is capable of clear thinking. That he could make an effective speech and drive home into the audience certain unpalatable truths with success was clearly demonstrated by him on the Thyagaroya day celebration. It was a speech that disclosed the possibility of his future development. It gave sincere satisfaction to his listeners by the earnestness and vehemence it so well exhibited. He has also a sense of humour but not a very effective one. The remark that he made about labour becoming a menace to us if the Justice Party did not betimes take up its cause was meant to be a stroke of humour. But unhappily it was misunderstood by many.

The Kumararajah has an engaging way of accosting you. Never would he fail to greet you with a happy smile and a glow of his pupil. He would converse with you in a most pleasing manner and convince you that he is really so good a friend that you never suspected him to be. He will make you feel completely at home and will make you forget that he is an aristocrat. You would be immediately taken into his confidence and be told that youth must work up for the party or else the Party would go to dogs. His twisting fingers playingly intertwine with yours and his long arm would encircle your shoulders and you stride with him a pace or two in this embarrassing privilege and become his friend for ever. No one has studied human psychology so attentively and no one uses that knowledge to his best advantage as he does. He breathes courtesy everywhere he goes. He disarms your suspicions, if you have any. A kindlier prince there never lived, you unconsciously blurt out, as you leave his captivating presence. Happily rid of the aristocratic overbearing and aloofness, the Kumararajah mixes with the mob and earns its gratitude. He realises the place of rank in public life, its efficacy no less than its limitations. Like the unostentatious Prince of Wales who throws himself into the throng of labourers and spends a happy evening with them in drinking wine and cracking jokes, the Kumararajah also coquettes with the plebians and stoops to conquer them. He is a man who is gifted with that precious quality called tact to an inordinate degree. He is clever and calculating and therefore thoroughly

qualified to be a successful politician. He handles men with a greater dexterity than his community handles money. He is an antithesis of his stately father who is always on the heights of high society and undisturbed placidity. Unlike his father, the Kumararajah is thrilled by the smell of powder and the sound of the guns, though he would fain win the battle by a stroke of strategy rather than by igniting the powder.

RAO BAHADUR

Dr. C. NATESA MUDALIAR, M.L.C.

Who does not know Dr. Natesan? Who does not know his homely figure, and who does not know his household name? He that knows him not argues himself unknown. For Dr. Natesan is a popular figure in Madras who is familiar to all and friendly with everyone. From a man in the street to a mighty millionnaire every one knows him and every one loves him. For he is one of those noble natures whom to know is to love. His is a peculiar attachment to his partymen without peevishly estranging the people as a whole. There is hardly another man in the Justice Party who has so well conquered the hearts of the Non-Brahmins, so little creating the hatred of the Brahmins, as Dr. Natesa Mudaliar. He has the city in his heart and the city in its turn has him in its own. The metropolitans of Madras mention his name with pride and affection, not unmixed with pity, while the muffasil people regard his name as something of a myth. Somebody has spoken of Gandhi the myth as distinct from Gandhi the man. Even so there is, methinks Dr. Natesan the myth as distinct from Dr. Natesan the man. The fame of the Doctor's proverbial loyalty and freedom from hypocrisy has travelled far and wide throughout the Province and the Justicites have an instinctive reverence for him whenever they hear his name mentioned or read it in the papers. They have a vague feeling that if all their sense of self-

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less devotion, sincerity and sacrifice should assume a human frame and shape and strut about in a suit and speechify artlessly, it could not be very different from that of Dr. Natesa Mudaliar. With emotion in their hearts and tears in their eyes, every Muffasil Justicite hears the story of this 'mythical' Doctor's endless sacrifices and heroic services. And their wrath and indignation can hardly be repressed when they are told that the only return this selfless man gets is a cold rebuff and cumulative disappointment. Yet he gets never disgusted and yet he never grows cynical. Every time his path is crossed he grows all the more sincere in heart and buoyant in spirit. It is this incredible and irrepressible enthusiasm for the Party that has earned for the Doctor the vague but complimentary reputation of a 'myth.' "Good humour and generosity carry the day with the popular heart all the world over."

Shortish in stature, Dr. Natesan is dressed ever in a dark blue suit. His are the features which are clear cut and characteristic—agreeable food for the pen of a caricaturist. His longish face that slowly broadens from the pointed, narrow chin towards the half-bald head, is made the more prominent by the enormously broad and expansive forehead that rises up and then slopes towards the hair. His long, Hindenburg-whiskers and a pair of thickhaired eyebrows like miniature moustache, run almost parallel to each other. His small and deep-set eyes glare and glitter through a pair of glasses with a fixed, fiery gaze. The doctor's head slightly stoops to the front while he slowly

walks up to the seat, with his shoulders a bit swung back and his steadfast gaze on high. He carries his cane and hangs it from his arm wherever he goes and more so when he speaks.

Dr. Natesan resembles Mr. J. H. Thomas in some particulars and what A. G. G. says of the latter equally applies to the former. " There has never been a moment in his life when Mr. Thomas was not entirely at home and very comfortable indeed. He comes into the inn of the world with the breezy assurance of an old habitue who has known the landlord since he was a boy and is as hail-fellow-well-met in the best parlour as he is in the tap-room. He beams his broadest smile all round, cracks his joke with the easy liberality of a man who has plenty of them to scatter abroad. He will be as confidential with a Duke as with a dustman and will give either of them the civility of a wink in a most agreeable manner." In countries like England where democracy and politics are well developed, conferment of a nick name is a connon enough mode of honouring a favourite of the public. To win a soubriquet by which you are known from one end of the country to the other is to be more famous than to have earned a baronetcy or a peerage. " A nickname is a tribute of the public. It is the voice of Democracy acclaiming one of its chief jesters or one of its favourite actors. It is recognition of a certain quality of mind and character, a certain breeziness and gaiety, address or fancifulness or even foolishness, something that appeals to the humour of men rather than the gravity of men." And if Dr. Natesa

Mudaliar is without a nickname, it is not due to the fact that he does not deserve one but due to want of well-developed democracy in India. But a soubriquet like "Thatha" or even one like 'Dix' after the 'Jix' of Sir William in England can very well be imagined for the Doctor and would be most appropriate. It will come trippingly from the tongue. It will just embody the emotion of every one at his sight.

If Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswami Mudaliar represents the intellect of the Justice party with his eloquence and brains, Rao Bahadur C. Natesa Mudaliar represents the heart of the same with his healthy feelings and honesty. Dr. Natesan is the last of the Romans yet left on the stage of Justice politics.

> "The Justice Party is the justest Party
> Give that Party your support hearty"

is in fact the endless burden of his ancient song all through his life. He has an all-consuming, child-like and unswerving faith in its principles. It is he and he alone more than anyone else that can be said to live for the party and be ready to die for the same. He has no religion except the religion of the Justice party. His faith in the party's doctrines borders on the fanatic and far transcends his faith in God and religion. This attachment to his party can be equalled only by the attachment of a Jesuit to his Sacred Order. The sight of his partymen and the sound of his Party-name are refreshing to him. He delights in the mention of its name and dreads and shudders to think of its death

or even the probability thereof. If Napolean had said that he was the State, Dr. Natesan says he is the Party. But there is all the difference between his identifying himself with his Party and others identifying themselves with the same. Whereas every one of his Partymen thinks that his own elevation means the Party's advancement, Dr. Natesan thinks that the Party's victory everywhere is his own personal triumph. Never is he ashamed to scramble for and snatch at the loaves and fishes of office; nevertheless he does not keep even a bit for himself. He always fights other people's battles. He never fights for himself. Like the chivalrous and selfless warrior huntsman of old, Dr. Mudaliar hunts and daringly enough bags big game of jobs but only on behalf of others. He arrogates to himself the glory of the hunt but always allows his partymen to go shares of the prizes. He has no interests of his own separate from and save those of his party. At home and abroad, within his drawing room or while on the dining table, in the Cosmopolitan Club and in the Cabinet room, with an ordinary propagandist or an aristocratic leader, Dr. Natesa Mudaliar will always and ad nauseum, with the fervour and zeal of a missionary talk about the Justice Party and discuss about its present and future, with a proud reference to its glorious past. All other things are trivial and unreal compared to this Mistress of his heart. If it lives, you live, he says, and if it dies, why, you too die. In his blind faith and overzealousness he loudly proclaims to an amused audience, as if to counterpart the Congress-

man's claims, that the Justice Party is the only party in India which is broad-based on the solid foundation of justice and which is comprehensive enough to accommodate within its wide and warm wings all kinds of parties like the Congress, Independents and Muslims.

It is one of Dr. Natesa Mudaliar's proud claims to consistency and loyalty, that he has always been a true Justicite, a constitutional and orthodox one. And one may not grudge him this consolation. For when all is said and done, it is he more than any one else that has been consistently and continually representing the spirit as well as the letter of the principles and constitution of the Party. His whole life has been a series of struggles for the maintenance of the main features of the Party, unchanged and unpolluted. A dealer in pulses by profession, the Doctor himself has been the true pulse of the party, mirroring its health and fitness by means of its normal beat. He enshrines his party's principles in his heart and echoes its true voice through his words. There might have been times and occasions when even the Justice ministry had strayed a bit from the strict principles of the Party. But sure as anything, Dr. Natesan would never have swerved by a hair's breadth from them. The conscientious Doctor crossed the floor of the Legislature in 1923 and perched himself on the Opposition Benches on the very palpable and professed ground of being more true to the Justice Party than the ministry itself was. It was he who first drew the distinction between 'Justicites' in the truest sense and the ministerialists, though the latter too belong to

the same party. He did not see eye to eye with the second ministry of Panagal. He accused it of being untrue to the Party's ideals. Hence was the parting of his ways from them. But the moment proofs were forth-coming of the mending of their ways by the ministerialists, Dr. Natesan recrossed the floor with equal facility and ease as before.

Again there came an occasion for his 'revolt' in 1927. The Non-Brahmin Confederation held at Coimbatore, after much deliberation and discussion resolved to change the Creed of the Justice Party to the extent of permitting such of those Justicites as chose, to join the Congress as members thereof. There is no doubt of course that that was a tactical move, calculated to disarm the Congress Opposition. Yet this was not to the liking of the Doctor and some other colleagues as Sir K. V. Reddi, who separated themselves and seceeded from the main party and formed themselves into a group called the Constitutional Justicites. This political entity persisted in existence till 1930 and has not been heard of since.

But whether on the Opposition Benches or in the Official Block, Dr. Natesan is always a Justicite first and last and a fanatic and uncompromising one at that. He is the one fearless and unfailing friend of the Non-Brahmins. All through his Council career Mr. Mudaliar has been alert and all agog to espouse the cause of the Non-Brahmins, to ventilate their grievances and to establish their birth-right. Is it a question of giving a fair share of representation to Non-Brahmins

Dr. Natesa Mudaliar: "May I know whether in all countries in the world, ministers are not leaders of parties ?"

President.—"Yes, Yes. But it is a distant cry from the Seven Wells division to all countries in the world."

Dr. Natesa Mudaliar is a simple man, with a feeling heart and a child-like frankness and simplicity. He is at once unsophisticated and unsuspecting. He loves man-kind as a whole, albeit his love for a section is a bit more marked. But that is essentially a sympathy for the under-dog. "I love life" exclaimed this Doctor once "and I love youthful lives especially." This explains his eternal buoyancy and endless interest which grow with his age and glow with his enthusiasm, which is all youthful in nature. He has a definite partiality for the youths whom he pats and patronises with a paternal affection. Recommendation letters are his commonest mode of helping the students. Such letters have a free coinage in his mint and are issued in such unlimited quantities that there seems to be an inevitable depreciation in their value. He genuinely feels for the youth and greatly interests himself in their welfare. With a heavy heart and tearful eyes he appeals to the Government to intervene betimes and emancipate the thousands of educated unemployed from the thraldom of poverty and disease of despair. He is the most beloved public man in Madras liked and loved, both by Brahmins and by Non-Brahmins, both by Christians and by Muslims.

It has come to stay as a hallowed tradition and a hard custom to say either on the platform or in the Press that Sir P. T. Chetty and Dr. T. M. Nair founded the Justice Party and the Rajah Saheb of Panagal fostered it with care. To canonize any more name and to add to that galaxy would be condemned as a political heresy and a profane attempt to defile the sanctity of the dead triumvirate. Nevertheless it will do us no barm to know the real actor behind the scenes, none the less to be thanked and honoured because of a veil cast over that episode. For in a very real sense, Dr. Natesa Mudaliar was responsible for the birth of the Justice Party. No doubt the masterful personalities of Sir Thyagaroya and Dr. T. M. Nair brought into formal existence and performed its baptisement and Christening. No doubt they imparted to it a shape and a steady footing such as could have hardly been imparted by any others. No doubt too that they blessed the party with bell, book and candle and set it out with the equipments and outfitting on its glorious journey to its goal of power and service. But if only either of them had been left to himself without being brought together and bound by a golden tie of glorious friendship, in the place of the mutual repulsion that had kept them apart for evil, the Justice Party, at least the one we know could never have come into existence. And it was the perseverent, patient and magnanimous good offices of this queer Peace-maker of Madras that brought those two Olympians on the same platform and brought about a permanent and fruitful *entente cordiale* between them

The mother instincts of Thyagaroya's generosity, love and selfless devotion and the paternal and manly qualities of mental prowess, mighty intellect and marvellous tongue of Dr. Nair were united by him in a blissful bond of ever-lasting nuptials out of which unparalleled union sprang forth the all-powerful Justice Party. That is not all.

It cannot be too often repeated that Dr. Natesan had prepared the ground and set the stage ready for the Caesars and Mussolinis of the Justice Party. It was he that first of all realised the necessity and usefulness of an organisation for the Non-Brahmins, at once to bring them all together and to give battle to the Brahmins. The Dravidian Association was the consequence. With small beginnings, it grew and developed into a mature organisation of much importance. It even sent a representative of its own in 1919 to give evidence before the Parliamentary Committee in England. It was as the Founder-President of that first Association that Dr Natesa Mudaliar was 'At Home' to the Non-Brahmin graduates every year and infused the spirit of healthy revolt against the Brahmins and the spirit of self-respect in themselves. The Dravidian Association was the intelligent anticipation of the Justice Party; it was the genesis of the latter in a true sense. It had broadcast, however imperfectly, the message of the future Justice Party, at least in the city of Madras. And that healthy spirit was swaying the masses without a shape and a sign which were duly furnished to it later on. The Dravidian Association was the child of the doctor and the father

of the Justice Party. It also served incidentally to unearth and find out the latent genius of future luminaries like Mr. R. K. Shanmukham Chetti. And the simple Doctor that he is, he would fain share with Lord Willingdon the privileged God-fatherhood of the President of the Assembly.

What looked like a flagrant contradiction of his whole life and a fitful repudiation of his life-long principle happened sometime ago when Dr. Natesa Mudaliar had the ironical privilege in the Executive Committee meeting of moving a resolution admitting Brahmins into the fold of the Justice Party. It came from him as a bolt from the blue. The rank and file of the Party were taken by a wild surprise by this friek of the Doctor. An orthodox, constitutional Justicite of the no changers' school, he had apparently not prepared the public to receive this 'somersault' of his. At the Nellore confederation his attitude was at best one of equivocation. "One question we have already decided" he said "we are not admitting Brahmins. That tells seriously upon our ministry to-day." He added and said "Now, we must, by a resolution authorise our Leader Dr. Subbaroyan, to continue his ministry with a Brahmin in it." We are not sure if this anxiety on his part was only vicarious or if it was born of deep conviction. Whatever it might have been, there he is. Perhaps we must admire his quality of quick adaptation, even at such an old age. It can surely be nothing of forswearing of principles. It must be a keen, though sudden, realisation of the needs of the changing times.

He loves and admires all those who serve the interests of the Non-Brahmins in reality. He has a fervant admiration for Dr. Subbaroyan and Mr. S. Muthiah Mudaliar. He alone of all the Justicites has the political honesty and the rare courage to find the real benefactor and frankly appreciate him. Even for Sir C. P. Ramaswami Iyer he has got a word of appreciation. At the Nellore confederation the Doctor showed his evident anxiety to strengthen the hands of Dr. Subbaroyan. "Gentlemen" he exhorted "to speak about this ministry, it has been doing us as much, if not more than our own ministry did." Undaunted by the cries of 'no, no' that greeted this remark, he added "Dr. Subbaroyan earns the gratitude of the Non-Brahmins for doing any amount of good to them. Taking stock, you would find Dr. Subbaroyan has done good to the community more than all the previous Non-Brahmin ministries put together." Again there were wild and persistent cries of 'no, no' and 'withdraw'. "I shall withdraw the word" he concluded with undisturbed calmness "but we must recognise facts".

Politics is principally a game of dishonesty. It is conscienceless hypocrisy developed into a fine art. The more honest a man is, the less qualified a politician he is. "Politics as a trade" said Abraham Lincoln "finds most and leaves nearly all, dishonest." If any one were to persist in the virtue of honesty with a firm belief in the adage "honesty is the best policy", he may of course be admired for his simplicity of character but cannot be congratulated on his success; for he can have

none. If he has survived the polluting process of politics and has escaped its stamp of dishonesty, he has only written himself down as a political failure. In the world of politics the "good old plan

> That they shall take who have the power
> And they shall keep who can"

is followed with scrupulous care. In this sense, Dr. Natesan has nothing to take, much less to keep, for he simply cannot do either. He is too good and honest to do them. The sleepless sentinel of the Justice Party is always made to stand out. He has invested his all in the Party but is reaping only disappointments. The Justice Party has been a South-sea Bubble unto him. The people who have from 1920 till to-day, with a brief interval, voted him into the Legislature with readiness and rapturous joy deem no prize too big for him, provided they have the power to give it. But the cunning adventurers in the political woods are more than a match for the honest Doctor and his simplicity.

It is indeed melancholy to muse over his magnanimous life. His has been a record of all work no reward. He is neither a landed magnate spending his time in the pleasurable and favourite hobby of politics nor a prize-boy of the Party and a tenant of the Treasury Bench on a perpetual lease from His Majesty's Government. He makes his politics a life and death question—too serious an affair in this world. Worthy of the fondest nickname of the public (his Rao Bahadur title is more often forgotten than remembered), Dr. Natesan is more famous

and popular than the most famous of men. While the land is pested with 'Bahadured' men of baffling variety, always warming themselves under the sunshine of their own estimation and hardly known outside their circle, the magic name of Dr. Natesan is a name to be conjured with by the public. He is here, there and everywhere, applauded by some and cheered by others and always loved by all, by Brahmins no less than by Non-Brahmins. Though without an office, Dr. Natesan's is the peculiar privilege of occupying the highest office in the hearts of the people, appointed thereto by the Royal Sign Manual of the Imperial Masses of India. While titled non-entities and arrogant aristocrats dread the sight of the dangerous lion of public opinion and are cooing and billooing to win it over to their side, this heroic Doctor, like the adept ring-master that he looks, walks up straight into that lion's den with the easy familiarity of a favourite friend and strokes and speaks to it in an endearing tone. The tame and grateful lion understands his affectionate language and roars out its gratitude and registers its life-long loyalty to him. If the highest and ultimate reward for a public man is the approbation of his own conscience and the appreciation of the public at large, Dr. Natesan has that two-fold reward in plenty. He is acclaimed as its own and applauded wildly by that highest tribunal on earth, the Vox Populi which is at the same time the Vox Deii of Eternity!

HON'BLE MR. P. T. RAJAN.

"The race is not always to the swift, the fight is not always to the strong." If you wanted a living illustration of this saying, you need not travel too far. A peep into the Madras cabinet and especially at the Justice ministry would provide you with an example. A Rajah Saheb of Bobbili might have shot up at a psychological hour and be shifting for himself safely. A Kumarasami Reddiar might have found his way to the Treasury Bench and fixed himself therein, with tact and timely cleverness. And each of them retains his seat ably enough. But how can any one account for Ponnambala Thyagarajan's puzzling presence therein? Was it because of his past record of brilliant achievements that he was rewarded with a ministry? Was it because of his potential strength and promise of future greatness that he was put in that post of power? Or again, was it because it was felt that he was a first rate genius and a fiery orator whose presence in the cabinet is indispensable that he was accorded with alacrity that high place of honour? No. None of these. The Hon. Mr. P. T. Rajan owes his ministership to none of these reasons. We can only say that there he is and be content with that. He has been there for well-nigh four years, he is yet there and he has an overwhelming prospect of continuing there. He is on the Treasury Bench because he cannot be anywhere else. His colleagues have him amidst them because they can't help it. It is a chinese puzzle: it is a problem. While

P.N.A

stout-hearted men and sterling heroes are knocking in vain at the doors of office with wearied feet and watering tongue, Mr. P. T. Rajan is left enjoying, with no effort and non-chalantly the juicy fruits of office. Can it be due to one of those frieks of political irony which shoot up suddenly and scatter promiscuously, second class brains on the Treasury Benches? Or can it be because God Muruga willed that His sincere devotee should be rewarded and efficacy of prayer vindicated? Perhaps so. And for aught I know, that is the only explanation which is possible and which will be vouched for by Mr. Rajan himself. Should we not turn to God, when our frail human reason fails us?

A placid figure of fair complexion and medium size with a black-rimmed spectacle burnishing his face which is big, round and full, Mr. Rajan is seated in between his colleagues on the front Treasury Bench. He is simple in his dress and even a bit indifferent. The hair on his head which is half victimised by baldness, glows and glitters and enhances the lustre of his clean-shaven face. His is, however, not the lustre of beaming intelligence but of benevolent love. His thick and dark lips, eternal lovers of My Lady Nicotine, are too protruding and prominent to be missed by an on-looker. He reclines a bit on his seat, steadfastly and vacantly blinking at the ceiling, unperturbed by the uproar and heated debates of the House. Soon he becomes restive, rises up unconcernedly, slighty bows to the Chair and leaves the Hall. A little while after, he returns to his seat. On the way he is pulled by the

coat by a friend and he throws himself beside him and is indulging in a chat. Instantly a poll is demanded, the division bell rings and there is a stir in the House. He too gets up, walks to his seat, stands in his place and says 'aye' or 'nay' as his colleague by his side does.

Except when some over-zealous member thinks it proper to annoy him with a string of interpellations and except towards the end of the inevitable budget debates, he hardy inflicts a speech on the Honourable Members of the House. There are some members who would always be alert, eagerly watching for chances, as vultures for their prey and who would jump to their feet and speechify ad nauseum. But in the case of Mr. Rajan it is otherwise. In the art of reducing the occasions of speech-making to an irreducible minimum his colleagues and co-members have much to learn from him. He is innocent of eloquence. He hates that 'harlot of arts.' He is not even fluent. He measures and weighs his words and drops them out in a rhythm that is slow and regulated. He never gets animated. He never warms up when he speaks. I cannot help feeling that he almost always begins his speech with a premature anxiety to end it soon. He creates no disappointment in an audience because he raises no expectation in it. Matter of fact and plain, his speeches are listened to because he makes them before an audience and his speeches are recorded and read because he makes them in the Legislature. Nor does he envy the eloquence-mongers.

After a rather long sojourn of more than a decade in England, Mr. Rajan returned home as a full-blown Barrister with an Oxford degree attached. It is probable that he might have frequented the Court hall and the Library room of the Madura Bar with little inclination to practise and with no briefs at all. It is probable too that he might have felt himself a square peg in a round hole in the profession of Law, as indeed he is in the world of politics. Soon the Montford Reforms came. For Mr. Rajan it was easy enough to get into the Reformed Council and he entered it as a Justicite. Since 1920 he has been in the Council and has continued to be a Justicite with loyalty and consistency that is really admirable. That has been perhaps his characteristic virtue. Static and silent, shy and slow-moving, Mr. Rajan attended the Council, voted with the Justicites and quietly enjoyed life. He continued to discharge his duty as the Party's whip till 1930 when Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu included him in the Ministry he formed. Be it said to Mr. Rajan's credit that but for his untiring work and ceaseless organisation throughout the Presidency, success at the Polls would not have been possible to the Justice Party in 1930.

Mr. P. T. Rajan resembles Sir. Austen Chamberlain in more than one respect. Sir Austen was the whip of the Liberal Unionists in England and so was Mr. Rajan, the whip of the Justice Party in Madras. Like Sir Austen too, Mr. Rajan is quite common-place, uninspired and uninspiring. Though they do not say foolish things, they do say platitudes with aggravating

solemnity and talk about 'cheery optimism'. Both of them are noted for their "simple honesty of character", and their singularly feeble brains. If it can be said of Mr. Chamberlain, that he has said "as few unkind and unfair things as any man who has been in public life" it can be said of Mr. Rajan with a still greater propriety. He has neither the gift nor the taste for saying them. He is fair to a fault even to his foes.

Mr. Rajan is in politics not because he has an aptitude for the same but because he has aptitude for nothing else. His is not a dynamic personality nor has he a diplomatic genius. Tact he has none and tricks and tactics he hates and abhors. And yet if he is there it is because his partymen allow him to be there. Nay, they insist on his presence. He is in the Ministry not so much because he likes to be there as because his friends and followers solicit his being there. Never self-assertive, he is always a creature of his close friends. He would never serve the Tamils; yet the Tamils adore him as their idol. Left to himself, Mr. Rajan might resign his job, flee to his estate at Uttamapalayam, flee for ever from the madding crowd of politicians and partymen. It is in spite of himself that he is on the Treasury Bench and methinks he is anxiously looking forward to a permanent holiday from its painful encumbrances!

Sir Austen Chamberlain "is not really a politician at all but a Civil Servant who happens to hold a position in the Government" says a writer. How admirably

true is this of Mr. Rajan too! His mind remains that of a Civil Servant, obsequious to the course of events, but forestalling, originating nothing. An embodied representative of the spirit of civil service in politics, the Hon. Mr. Rajan is merely content to express the ideas of his permanent officials in appropriate Parliamentary language and to affix his signature to all the routine files. Even if he be not a Civil Servant himself, he is led by the nose by the Civil Servants of the 'steel-frame'. Mr. Rajan is a good bureaucrat. And the same qualities of mind that go to make a bureaucrat disqualify him for creative politics. In the world of creative politics Mr. Rajan has no place at all. He has no policy of his own and no programmes to be worked out, save perhaps those of his Justice Party. But even in the carrying out of the programmes and policies of his Party, his share of work has been insignificant, almost nothing. He hardly ever interferes with the decisions of his colleagues and no more influences them than Joah steered the whale. He is just a sleeping partner in the Justice Ministry. Four long years have fleeted by since Mr. Rajan's assumption of office and he has nothing but a barren record of amiable futility to present to his countrymen. Perhaps his efforts at the formation and promotion of the Land Mortgage Banks in this Presidency are the only oasis in the vast desert of his want of work. Lately he attended a Conference at Simla to discuss the future of sugar industry in India, returned home and made a few speeches. Except for this, he has said or done nothing so far to capture the imagination or kindle the enthusiasm of his countrymen. Never

noted for anything he has done, Mr. Rajan is still more notorious for what he has left undone. If on the Day of Judgment Mr. Rajan should be hauled up before the tribunal of Vox Populi which is Vox Deii and commanded to render a true account of his tenure of office, lest they returning chide, I wonder how he would attempt his defence. Perhaps, like the honest man that he is, he would, 'plead guilty', snap his fingers and burning his boats, would march off to Madura, at the same time not forgetting his silk hat and cigarette tin. He will not shed a single tear over that.

With all his faults, Mr. P. T. Rajan is not a self-seeker in the sense in which the whole race of politicians are. And even if he were, "his mental operations are too slow and his political strategy too negligible to enable him to succeed." Leadership of a political party is always a luring temptation for politicians. And more so is the leadership of the Justice Party since it almost invariably carries the sweets of office with it. There has been, of late, such a mighty scramble for it. It has been a veritable apple of discard. Ever since the demise of the Raja Saheb of Panagal the Party was straying about like a pack of sheep without a shepherd. Speculation was rife as to the possible candidates for Leadership. Thus the confederation met at Nellore in 1929. Mr. Rajan and Dr. P. Subbaroyan contested for it. But the contest, which in all probability would have crowned him, was avoided by the selfless act of Mr. Rajan who resigned his claim. And here is a parallel to Sir Austen's life. After the deposition of

Mr. Balfour from leadership of the Conservative Party, Mr. Chamberlain might well have regarded the reversion of leadership as his own. But Mr. Walter Long too wanted it. And Mr. Chamberlain yielded to a *tertium quid* solution of the question by making Mr. Bonar Law the leader, without a murmur and with perfect good temper. Even so in the case of the Justice Party, Mr. P.T. Rajan, while he was opposed by Dr. P. Subbaroyan, consented to forego his chance in favour of Mr. B. Muniswami Naidu. The parallel does not stop here. Again the leadership of the Justice Party fell vacant as that of the Conservative Party had fallen vacant in England. Even here Mr. P. T. Rajan whose claims to and chances for leadership were still stronger than before, resigned it in favour of the Rajah of Bobbili as Sir Austen Chamberlain had selflessly suffered Mr. Baldwin to snatch at it. Thus twice was the crown proffered to Mr. Rajan and twice did he refuse it. If this is not selflessness, what else is it ?

The actions of Mr. Rajan are not always characterised by caution. He never thinks and acts. And when he does act finally, he almost always repents. The conduct of Mr. Rajan prior to, during and after the Non-Brahmin Confederation at Tanjore was not on the best traditions of loyalty of a member to his leader and colleague. As a leader of the Party, Dewan Bahadur B. Munisami Naidu had undoubtedly a grievance against his deputy's want of loyalty. But Mr. Rajan's conduct was actuated by the best of public and party motives. When there seemed to have occurred an obvious clash

between the interests of the Leader and those of the Party, Mr. Rajan had naturally to choose the latter in preference to the former, though he had thereby to incur the displeasure of his colleague and the disapproval of the casual critic. And at last when the crisis had occurred, Mr. Rajan resigned his post along with his colleagues. When the Rajah of Bobbili formed the ministry in 1932, Mr. Rajan was inevitably included in the cabinet.

Later on some time ago, Mr. Rajan happened to preside over an S. I. L. F. meeting at Tanjore. Here too his thoughtlessness or want of caution betrayed him into a blunder. He made some very honest and candid confessions about the Justice Party's record of work or rather the want of it. After he had spoken he left the hall. But the same meeting was continued and some speakers including Rao Bahadur A. T. Pannirselvam unburdened their hearts in none too complimentary a manner to the 'Leader' and Chief Minister—the Rajah of Bobbili. With flashing headlines there appeared a big report in the 'Hindu' the next day. A huge sensation was created in the province. That was taken for the first signs of the coming revolt in the Party. Mr. Rajan thus fell an unconscious victim to his friends' candidness and the Press correspondent. The Rajah of Bobbili was naturally annoyed. He was anxious that the impression created by this performance should be obviated at the earliest possible moment. So Mr. Rajan sent a repudiation to the Press, which

repudiated nothing materially, ran to Vellore, was presented with an Address of Welcome and he made a long and laboured speech, loudly avowing his deep loyalty to his chief and lyrically singing the party's credit and greatness. But his readiness to unsay and apologise is only comparable to the courage of Sir Austen to say "*Peccavi.*"

It is true that he had indentified himself with the Self-Respect movement while it was in its infancy. But soon he found out that he could not keep pace with its gigantic strides towards atheism. So he called a halt to his co-operation with it and was merely content to mouth the hackneyed platitudes about the harm of caste system, priesthood, etc. He could neither swallow nor administer stronger pills than that. His early training and education in England gave no room for the seeds of caste to germinate in his mind and he has therefore got a natural detestation thereof. It is therefore neither by effort nor by conviction that Mr. Rajan seems to hate caste. Nevertheless his profound and perfect 'bakti' for his favourite God seems to have survived his 'civilizing' stay in England. He scruples not to avow his faith in Saivism in the choicest terms. Though a full blown product of western culture and education and though a hetrodox in every other respect, yet Mr. Rajan is just a typical Ponnambalam of the Tamil saivite tradition in his piety and pujas. He carries with him the inevitable 'gold spear' in all his peregrinations and worships it with unfailing regularity. Clad in the simplest attire, Mr. Rajan frequents every Temple

of Muruga in the land and performs with fervour 'abishekams' and 'archanas.' A paradox it undoubtedly is, but be it said to his credit that he does not pretend this part. It is indeed a pleasing sight to see him evade the public gaze at his 'religion', while hundreds and thousands put on this cloak of religion and parade it in public!

From the Grammar school to his graduation Mr. Rajan got his education in Oxford. Thus fed and nourished on the western culture at its very source, Mr. Rajan has got it assimilated in his whole being. He is essentially a man of culture. He is a Gentleman in the fullest sense of that term. Generous and kind to a fault, he accosts you with a familiar nod and friendly air, at times with affection too and loses himself in a sincere and cordial chat. Indecisive and incapable of action though he be, he hesitates not to confess the real difficulties and the reasons for the same. Among those mighty tin-Gods of the Ministry none is so affable, so accessible and kind as Mr. Rajan is. The moment you meet him, he sheds his 'reserve' if any and makes you feel at home. Patience he has in plenty. Born of a noble and aristocratic family whose hospitality and high sense of honour are proverbial in the Madura District, Mr. Rajan perseverently perpetuates those healthy traditions of his family. He is a born patrician but a perfect friend of the plebians. "A Vellala dines not with a guest waiting out" is an ancient Tamil saying which no other family of Vellalas follows and exemplifies half as scrupulously as Mr. Rajan's does. As a person of politi-

cal purity Mr. Rajan occupies a high place in Madras politics. To say this of him is to have said much of him. He represents the Tamil wing of the Justice Party in the Cabinet, not indeed its subtle genius but its generous impulse and hospitality.

DR. (MRS.) S. MUTHULAKSHMI REDDI.

On the 27th January 1927 the Madras Legislature presented a marvellous picture—the picture of a solemn assemblage of Statesmen and Princes and Scholars and scions presided over by the shy, small figure of a spectacled lady sinking deep into the soft-cushioned seat of the Speaker's chair. It was unheard of in the world and unprecedented in history. Women M.P.'s, Women ministers, women governors and women warriors the world has seen but not a woman President of a deliberative Assembly. History was therefore made when the Madras Legislature made Dr. Muthulakshmi its Deputy President. The conferment of this unique honour on her constituted a Kohinoor on the dazzling diadem of Indian womanhood. Not a drum was heard, nor a gun was fired and the exclusive fortress of masculine monopoly silently glided into the hands of our sisters! The flag of peaceful feminism was unfurled and one more magnificent fortress was added to the imperial dominion of Indian Womanhood! Unlike England where "a monstrous regiment" of militant women had to wrest their rights from the unwilling grip of men, men in the Province of Madras magnanimously yielded when women demanded their birthright.

Madras had for long been contemptuously dubbed as 'benighted' by the rest of India. But, of late, Madras has been emerging out of the gloom into the floodlights of civilization. It has been producing such men

and women and performing such acts as have kindled the feelings of envy and emulation in the whole of India. Not the least important among such acts is her intelligent initiative in the matter of giving the womanhood its due. Before any other province thought of such a question, Madras alone moved in the matter and by exercising the power vested in its Legislature, conferred on women the *jus suffragi*—the right of voting. It was naturally followed by the conferment of the right of election and nomination to the Local legislature. The only woman who contested an election —Mrs. Kamaladevi—having been defeated at the polls, Dr. Muthulakshmi, who was recommended by the Women's Indian Association was duly nominated to the Council. Quite in keeping with the high sense of political chivalry that had actuated it so far, the Madras Legislature further elected her as its Deputy President.

Invited thus by the entire House to guide its deliberations, Dr. Muthulakshmi nervously took the chair and not without misgivings. The imposing composition of the House, the enormous responsibility placed on her, and the consciousness that the whole assembly was riveting its gaze on her—the only woman there—all this flashed through her mind and petrified her for a moment. But soon she came to herself and listened gravely and attentively to the speeches of the Hon. Members. Sensitive to the last degree, she felt within herself that the worth and reputation of her sex wholly depended on how best she was going to aquit herself that day. Soon her powers of judgment were put to

the test. The discussion was on the Kumararajah of Venkatagiri's amendment to the Madras Famine Code. She was required to give her ruling, which she did. To her great pride and gratification it was a correct one. She felt with a sigh of relief that she had kept up and enhanced the reputation of her sex whose representative she was.

"It was a good thing" said Lady Astor "that the first woman to get into Parliament was an ordinary woman, because it made it easier for other ordinary women to succeed her." The first woman to become a member of an Indian Legislature, Dr. Muthulakshmi too can say the same thing of herself, perhaps with greater truth. For, Lady Astor is an "ordinary woman" of a strange type—a torrential personality, who if she were the rule instead of the exception, "life on this planet would be too thrilling an affair to contemplate with composure." She is so full of the "engaging audacities," impulsive gaieties and formidable bravado that she is ordinary only in an extraordinary sense. But Dr. Muthulakshmi is none of these. If Lady Astor's "view halloo," assures the House of sport and sensation, the dignified bearing of the Doctor diffuses respect everywhere. Mrs. Reddi would not, for example, have exclaimed to Sir Patro "Oh, you old villain, I will get you next time" and would not have held him by the coat-tails when the latter opposed her Devadasi Bill, as Lady Astor had done in the case of Sir Frederic Banbury. Nor is the Doctor capable of terrorising her mischievous interrupter into silence as

Lady Astor did a villainous interrupter of hers. When the member for Dumfermline said that she should confine herself to milk and babies and leave the Navy alone, Lady Astor retorted that if he would drink more milk and less *lemonade*, he would be more polite to the only woman in the House. Any retaliation of such a vehement nature and ungenerous implication is impossible to conceive from Mrs. Reddi. She was speaking in the Council on the necessity of reservation of seats for women on the ground that they are not economically independent and can ill-afford to spend on election campaigns. Mr. S. Satyamurthi interrupted her, saying "Women have jewels." And how did she reply him? She simply said "Sir, the Hon. Member for the University says that women are adorned with jewels. Yes, that is so because men adorn them with jewels, give them silk sarees and they may even give them motor cars to go to beach; but independence is quite a different matter." Not a crushing retort, to be sure but just becoming a modest woman of Mrs. Reddi's type.

"Who is the greatest and wisest woman in England?" Dr. Fort Newton asked of Jane Adams of America. "Maude Royden" she replied "for she wants women to be recognised as human beings and not as a sex." If this should be the criterion, Dr. Muthulakshmi cannot be the wisest and greatest woman of India. For, the ex-Deputy President of Madras insists on the recognition of women as a sex. That men's and women's interests are identical she does not hesitate to concede. And yet she maintains that

"we want women to represent women's point of view and hence reservation of seats for women is necessary." As a Government spokesman once exclaimed, "She is very zealous of ladies' rights." While a Doctor Besant roared in the genderless tones of general humanity and a Sarojini lisps in sensuous numbers like a sweet-throated Swan, Mrs. Reddi screams in the afflicted accents of injured womanhood. Dr. Besant transcended the barriers of sex and nationality and tightened the bond that knit humanity together. Sarojini Devi jumps into the vortex of national politics and jeopardises her musical lyre for the cherished freedom of her country. But Dr. Muthulakshmi ceaselessly labours to save her fallen sex and to regain for her sisters their Paradise Lost. This test apart, for intellectual agility and powers of pen and eloquence one must look elsewhere than to Mrs. Reddi, her brilliant academic career and her bright medals notwithstanding. A Besant or a Sarojini would better deserve the crown for that. Nevertheless, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi holds the most individual position among the public women of the time. She has evolved a technique of legislative liberation that will always stand to her political credit. In the breaking of man-made laws and in the making of beneficial ones no woman of the modern times has beaten her record. Place in the Legislature was never better filled and position therein was never more utilised than by Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi. If intellectualism were not much exhibited, energy and sincerity were surely much in evidence. Like Miss Royden of England she "represents as effec-

tually as any one the conscience and the moral sense of the community."

She devotes herself to social and educational work rather than purely political or religious work. Her activities touch mainly secular affairs and moral issues. Yet politics are no forbidden ground to her. She has enough of politics to heal the wrongs of her sex rather than hate her fellowmen with. Dr. Muthulakshmi recognises no party and belongs to none. She is neither a Justicite, nor a Swarajist, nor even an independent nationalist. She has never indentified herself with any party within the Council or without it. She is the friend and favourite of all the parties and the foe of none. Throughout her Council life, she was receiving the help of one party or other or of all the parties together. The Justice Party contributed its own quota to make her efforts a success. The Independent Party under Dr. P. Subbaroyan did all it could to implement her reform schemes. Above all she had the most valuable assistance from the Swarajist section of the House. She says "While all the peoples' parties in the Council favoured every scheme for the amelioration of women's conditions, I found that the nationalists and the Congressmen, with one or two individual exceptions have been my staunch and enthusiastic supporters, especially the Andhras in khadar dress and gandhi caps."

During her year's stay in England, during the World Conference of Women in Paris and in the course

of her tour through America, Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi met many persons and saw many things—all that is best in the West. She has nothing but admiration for the women workers of the West. She appreciates the West at its real worth and does not hesitate to imbibe whatever is sound in its culture and civilization. In the course of a Budget debate a certain member desired that the Government should encourage the indigenous medicine of ayurvedic and unani systems in preference to the allopathic ones. But the then Deputy President opposed his suggestion and said that our systems are yet 'empirical and stand-still' and are not so fully developed as to be able to replace the allopathic system. "We ought to appreciate" she said "the good in any system and feel grateful to those men who have discovered such rare remedies as vaccination for small-pox, cures far malaria etc." That is not all. She admires the average Englishman for his high level of culture, politeness, independent and manly bearing and for his disciplined and orderly conduct and she regrets keenly that an average Indian does not possess those qualities as a rule. Neither is she without a sense of appreciation of the British Government in India. "Let me impress upon the government" she exclaimed once "that we want their help and guidance for some time more." For she feared that without the help of the Britisher, the problems of untouchability and sex inequality could not be effectively solved. Perhaps, she has since changed her views. She has made some strides towards political 'extremism', of late.

Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi is essentially a patriot but she is not a fanatic. Never blind to the good in alien cultures, she nevertheless yearns for the best in her own culture. Despite some of its advantages, she has never liked the modern system of education. Religion and morals never find a place in its curriculum, which has resulted in the predominence of materialism in a land famed for its spiritualism. She deplores this state of affairs most deeply. She would fain formulate a system in which our religion, our past culture and tradition should have a large share and at the same time be suitable to modern conditions of life." "I myself do not know what my own religion is" she painfully cries elsewhere, as though she would throw the blame for it on the present system of education. She would rather have the children taught the ennobling and indigenous tales of Nala and Damayanthi, Savitri and Satyawan than the foreign tales of Romeo and Juliet, and Othello and Desdemona. She is such a lover of her mother tongue that she would insist on education being imparted to our children only through the medium of the vernacular. Thus she is neither an unreasoning fanatic averse to all that is alien nor an indiscriminating slave aping all that is Western. She is the living embodiment of all that is best both in the East and in the West. There is an admirable equipoise in her activities and bearing. A Brahmo that she is, her piety is charged with a modern spirit and a freedom from cant. Intellect and feeling are in harmonious blending. She is the respectability, love and self-sacrifice of the

Indian mother and the intellectualism, energy and catholicity of the Western woman, all in one. Mrs. Reddi is not of the aggressively emancipated type. Man, according to her is not the natural foe of woman but her friend and well-wisher whose co-operation is essential for the welfare of the latter. And she loses no opportunity of expressing her thankfulness to men. "There is no sex rivalry and no sex antagonism" she says. She knows and is thankful for the fact that but for men and their noble efforts she could not have entered the Council, much less passed many measures of useful reform.

It is impossible to find a more vigilant and more sincere guardian-angel than Mrs. Reddi to protect and promote the interests of women in India. Redressing the grievances of her sex alone is her religion. Promoting the weal of her sisters is a passion with her. She thinks about them, dreams about them, writes about them and speaks about them, with ceaseless concern and interest. Hardly does she do or talk of anything that has no bearing on the problem of womanhood. Every measure is good or bad according as it helps or hinders the advancement of her sex. Within a short span of about four years she has achieved many things and passed more momentous measures than many legislators could have done during their life-time. For the establishment of a children's hospital, for the introduction of compulsory medical inspection for boys and girls, for the exemption of poor girls from the payment of fees, etc. she was ceaselessly agitating and

became successful. She spoke and wrote strongly in favour of providing the Women's Institutions in Madras with liberal grants; and her efforts were crowned with success. Her resolutions on the prevention of child marriage and the prevention of dedication of girls to Hindu temples are equally important. She moved resolutions and put interpellations and succeeded in having seats reserved for women in local bodies. Above all comes her Act for the suppression of brothels for which, though it was not directly moved by her, she can claim the fullest credit. That alone will stand forth and eloquently proclaim her deep concern and interest for the much-neglected members of her sex. She considered it one of her pet schemes and piloted it through the legislature with perseverance and zeal. The passing of the Devadasi Bill in 1929 is another and by far the best achievement of Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi as a legislator. Opposition to that measure automatically came from the vested interests. Indignant protests emerged from enlightened quarters too. But the author of the Bill was adamant and unyielding. She addressed meetings in hundreds, distributed pamphlets by the thousands and thus organised and mobilised intelligent public opinion in favour of her Bill. Associations and public bodies voted addresses of welcome to her, appreciating her efforts at eradicating that national evil and accorded her a full measure of their moral support. At long last the Bill was brought to the Statute Book. The forces of reform and progress emerged fully triumphant over the impotent wrath of enervating reactionarism. The Bill survived the parthian shafts of orthodoxy and became

Law. And that is the *magnum opus* of Mrs. Muthulakshmi.

The political life of no other woman is half as crowded and busy as that of Doctor Muthulakshmi Reddi. It was not without justification that she hesitated to accept a seat in the Council when she was nominated thereto. A medical practitioner of fourteen years' standing, who had just returned from England after specialising in the diseases of women and children cannot be deemed to have consulted her interests, when she chose politics to the prejudice of her profession. And from a purely financial and professional point of view, it was a sacrifice that she made. A day of rest to her since then has been a day that never dawns. Even Sunday is no Sabbath day for her. All through the year she has to attend conferences, now an All-India one, now a provincial one and now a district one—all women's conferences. All Asia Women's Conference too she has attended. And she attends most of them as a President or distinguished visitor. No Women's Conference in India seems to be complete without her ennobling and distinguished presence. Whenever she has no conferences to attend, she serves on committees. While a member of the Council, she served on several committees such as Health and Welfare Committees, Temperance Committe, Vigilance Committee, Social hygiene, Social reform and Social Service Committees. In addition, she served on such purely women's committees such as the Women's Indian Association, the Muslim Ladies'

Association, the Seva Sadan, the Children's Aid Society etc. Besides all these, Mrs. Reddi was a member of the Hartog Committee on Indian Education and toured thoughout India. She has to read and digest all current publications both in English and in the vernacular to post herself with up-to-date information. A phone-call by one, a personal call by another, advice for a third and a recommendation for a fourth—thus her whole time is divided and dedicated for public sevice alone. Amidst all this she has her family affairs too, to look after. Like Lady Astor she "seems to have the secret of perpetual motion and inexhaustible animation. She rises early and retires late and whirls like a spinning wheel the whole time." A tale of woe wrings out tears from her eyes and moves her to mighty indignation. She never rests before she gives succour to the needy. She is too full of the milk of human kindness to speak a harsh word or evince an unkind expression. She is so tolerant of other people's opinions and convictions that she would always avoid wounding them, if she could. She would rather allow Brahmin widows observe caste distinctions in a common institution like the Widows' Home than enforce the principle of equality on them and thus compel them to leave the institution and deny themselves the benefits thereof. Yet this considerateness does not deny her conviction in social equality. Rather, it is the tender-hearted weakness of a hyper-sensitive woman.

Dr. Muthulakshmi's views on women and their activities are unique and quite laudable. She does not want that women should be given university education,

at any rate not the one that is imparted to-day, a purely literary one that produces misfits in life. But she wants that primary and higher education should be within the reach of every girl. She would seem to favour co-education as such but she complains that because men teachers neglect girl pupils, the latter do not make much progress. The number of girls who take to such professions as medicine and teaching being very small, and the majority of girls being meant for home-life, she would fain have the girls taught and trained up in such subjects as would make them efficient and intelligent housewives. It is also her fervent desire that women should be recruited to the Police ranks, to deal with questions of women offenders. Finally she appeals to such of those women as have education, experience and knowledge to enter into legislative bodies and render service to their country.

A sincere and strenuous worker, Dr. Muthulakshmi has a very high sense of duty. Come what may, she will perform her duty, strictly and scrupulously. She will plant herself at her post of duty and strive on and on "as ever in the great Task-master's eye." She deems no sacrifice to be too big, if only she could satisfy her conscience that she has done her duty and done it well. On one occasion Mrs. Muthulakshmi Reddi attended the council and addressed it too on her resolution on the prevention of child marriage, although she was "suffering from a severe attack of influenza." That was not all. On the 31st January 1930—the day on which her most cherished amendments to the Suppression of Brothels

Bill were to have been moved, a calamity overtook her. Suddenly a near and dear relation of hers—her father took seriously ill and became unconscious. Her presence was most necessary at the bedside. Not less imperative was her presence at her post of duty. Never was a struggle between filial duty and public duty keener than in her case. She had the most painful choice before her. And she chose the only course that a woman of her sincerity and public spirit could be expected to have chosen. She had to tear herself away from his bedside and with an indescribable pain and anguish of heart she went to the council that day. As ill-luck would have it, her amendment was voted down and caused her no small disappointment and chagrin. Yet she managed to reap the greatest consolation at the thought that she had done her duty by the womanhood and that her father's spirit would bless her withall.

Mrs. Muthulakshmi's speeches are characterised by feeling and emotion. She speaks, not eloquently but with ease and fluency enough to please her hearers. You cannot find any tricks of rhetoric but you can certainly find the trace of sincerity pervading her whole speech. She is possessed of an admirable knowledge of facts and figures and marshals them all marvellously while she deals with matters like health, hygiene, education and womanhood. Her council speeches are a mine of information, if not models of oratory. At times she assumes a drolling tone and speaks in a dragging manner.

When Mahatma Gandhi was arrested by the Government in 1930, many were the Indians that resigned

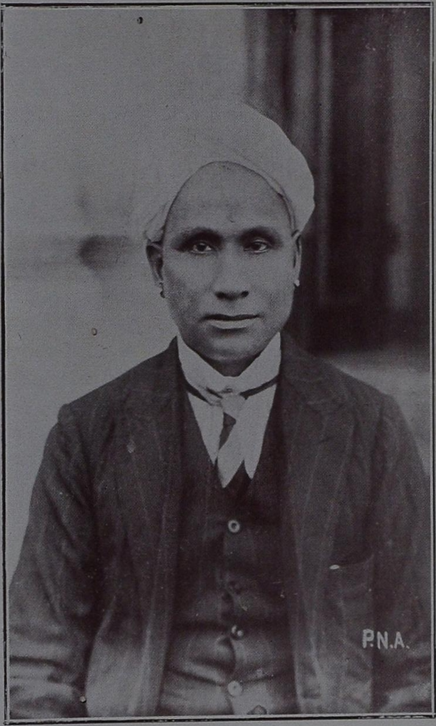
their places in the Legislatures and thus registered their protest against the Government's act. Among them Dr. Muthulakshmi was one. She too resigned her Deputy Presidentship as well as her membership of the Madras Council. And that was a tremendous sacrifice the magnitude of which is hard to gauge. Mrs. Reddi has an inordinate and passionate love for Mahatma Gandhi who in his turn is appreciative of her. Thus his arrest had a strong reaction on her heart and she instantly obeyed its dictates. Merely as a mark of protest and as a demonstration of India's self-respect her resignation might be applauded and admired. But from the point of view of practical politics it served no purpose. On the other hand, much more solid and substantial work that she could have continued to turn out from within the Legislature was made impossible. To love and be wise is an impossibility and the practical wisdom of that act born of sentimental love is therefore open to question.

With all that, the life of Mrs. Reddi is a life full of love and labour. It is a noble and selfless life dedicated to the service of her down-trodden sisters. Love's labour for its own sake was never better performed than by Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi. It was given to her to inaugurate the political emancipation of women and exemplify it in her own life. Since then, she has been giving the Women's Movement in India such a turn and a direction as leave nothing to be desired. No wonder then that she has been elected as the honoured President of the Women's Indian Association, as a worthy

successor to the late Dr. Besant. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi is a living link between the fast-dying generation of the slow-moving womanhood and the feverish generation of the freedom-loving flappers, that is coming into its own. As a reliable guide to the one and a respected leader to the other, she holds the balance between the two. A loving wife, an affectionate mother and an unselfish public worker, Mrs. Reddi is as near prefection as a mortal woman can be. She lives, moves and has her being only in the Women's Movement in India. She lives for it and will die for it. She has set up an undying and inspiring example in her life for the members of her sex to admire and follow. When the history of Indian Women's Movement comes to be written, the historian will be constrained to give her and her activities a chapter by itself—by far the most interesting and illuminating one. Dr. Muthulakshmi Reddi has assured for herself a place of honour and prominence in the palatial Temple of Fame and in the People's hearts. Though not the greatest woman in India, Dr. Muthulakshmi is easily the best woman; and a nation that has produced her is a nation that can be proud!

MR. S. MUTHIA MUDALIAR.

Methinks as though a ministership in the Madras Cabinet is the last Act in a man's life, the crowning and the coping stone that completes his political career. Methinks too that he must have burnt his boats and mumbled his last prayers; he must have written 'finis' to the last chapter of his political life and laid down his office and retired, unhonoured and unsung. For an ex-Minister of the Madras Cabinet is either an exhausted volcano or merely a spent-up force. This is at least the impression that creeps into your mind and keeps you wondering, the case of Sir Kurma notwithstanding. For, one has sunk into oblivion, another is altogether unheard of, a third has receded to the background while a fourth has run into bankruptcy, a fifth is nourishing forlorn hopes and yet another is chewing his empty cud. Some of them have been shut out of the Legislature and others that have been shoved in are pining under a sad plight. And all of them together are immortal in their insignificance. May be that they deserve this all or may be that they are unfortunate in their countrymen whose sense of political gratitude is so miserably poor. Our people have yet only an undeveloped sense of politics. Rapturous applause of the populace and the recognition by the Powers-that-be are seldom the right index of a man's record. Even in England "a peerage may have no more significance than that you have brewed good ale or have been a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skilful toady." Worse is the case in India. A sweeping success at the Polls is as unreliable a criterion of a man's popularity as the 'Dewan Bahadur' title is of the holder's dignity and greatness. The one means you have squandered money in thousands and the other means you have spent it all just wisely. That is all. Similarly defeat at the Polls is hardly a political disgrace: it is neither a retribution to one's past nor a punishment for one's present. It means nothing more than that one could not plough the electorate with a golden furrow and sow the seeds of gold and silver on the wayside as profusely as the successful candidate. If all this is true, methinks we can yet erase, if not altogether escape, the initial impression that forms in us of these ex-ministers. I cannot speak for all of them. But about Mr. S. Muthia Mudaliar I have no doubt left in me, no doubt regarding his past achievements and future promise, notwithstanding his present retirement. For it is nothing but an involuntary retirement—a deserving rest after the rigours of Office. This volcano at least is not exhausted; it is only slumbering. This force at least is yet unspent; it is only gathering momentum. Like the simple but brave Cincinatus of Rome, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar of Tanjore abandoned his plough of abundant practice at the Bar to wield the weapon of ministerial power for a time. And like the same old hero of the stately Rome, the latter too, when "his task had been smoothly done" laid down his Office and returned to his avocation with scarcely a murmur and with no reproach at all.

The community from which he hails—the Thonda-mandala Vellalars—is one of the most self-conscious ones amongst the non-Brahmins. In the consciousness of its sanctity and in the claims it has for supremacy none else can beat it save the Brahmins They are on a par with the Brahmins in the scrupulous observance of customs and in the strictness of orthodox living. Saivite in religion and vegetarian in diet they have much more in common with the Brahmins than with the majority of non-Brahmins. They are only a non-Brahmin edition of the Brahmin complex. Except that they are not Brahmins they are not much of non-Brahmins. Hence their unconquerable propensity to the Brahmins. Secondly he is a typical son of the Tanjore soil, a rare product of its ripe civilization. The traditional tuft on the head and the dazzling diamond ear-rings, the clean-shaven face and the characteristic accents are the Birmingham seal that point out his place of birth and training. He belongs to a district which is the proverbial fortress of the Brahmin hierarchy. Ever spiritually swaying the masses, they are economically too invulnerable therein. A good share of the landed interests is represented by them. The Brahmins are a strong and solid unit that can decisively influence anything by its shere weight. The whole of the Tanjore breathes the Brahminical atmosphere. It thinks in Brahminical terms and talks in Brahminical accents. These two environmental influences are of much importance to us. While on the one hand they explain his attitude towards the Brahmin-entry question, they

on the other enhance his reputation for courage, as exhibited in his communal G. O.

Though ordinary in dress and unimpressive in appearance yet Mr. Muthia Mudaliar is no ordinary person. Though not without the subtlety of Tanjore he is too full of the commonsense of his community. He is slow but steady and though he does not flash out on the horizon he nevertheless firmly treads his ground. If he does not impose you by his wit, he certainly impresses you with his insight. Though his attitude towards the Brahmin entry question has been influenced by his environments, yet it is not without its foundation on principle. For Mr. Mudaliar is no sentimentalist. He has no use for catch-words and political shibboleths. Practical to the core, he hates 'the impatient idealist'. He is not an opportunist that cautiously calculates the chances and casts in his lot with the strongest. He is essentially a man of unbending principles and unyielding individuality. He is stern as a Jesuit and simple as a saint. He is independent and courageous, ever ready to assert himself. He is always zealous of his rights and he will risk all on a fight. As an undergraduate at Kumbakonam the young and impetuous Muthia was ever sensitive and a little pugnacious. He would as readily stand up in the class room and point out his professor's error as he would incur the displeasure of his Principal by zealously fighting for the students' rights. And for this boyish impudence and overzealousness he was deprived of the medal to which he was entitled for proficiency in composition. Far

from regretting all this, he is proud of his past and proud of his independent bearing.

His straight and thin upper lip in grips with the thick and broad lower one, gives us an impression of his self-complacency and supreme contempt for the world. Add to this his twinkling little eyes under a pair of thin eye-brows and his broad and uneven fore-head, a bit elevated at the top and you get the picture, not, of course, of a dynamic personality but surely that of a person of cynical loftiness and stern independence. It is a picture of great detachment and grave purposes. The first impression is one of distance and distrust. His closely-wedded lips are rarely parted to let a smile play on. They seem to intensify their mutual grip at the sight of men, as though they would entrench him against their assailing inquisitiveness. In spite of all these external features of no pre-possessing nature, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar has a kind heart and courteous demeanour. He is sound in his heart and simple in his mind. Methinks there is an unconscious and hitherto unnoticed aptness in his name. 'Muthu' means pearl in Tamil and it is like a pearl that Mr. Mudaliar is. The pearl of his sincere and simple soul lies embedded and inside the shell-like coverings of his simple appearance. One must be possessed of the keynote, the secret 'Open sesame' to unlock the portals of his heart and mind and then revel in the rapturous sight of their precious contents. Except for those who can touch the right chord in his mental instrument, he has rather a deceptive appearance that conceals much from a casual on-looker.

Though a Justicite from the very beginning, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar had ceased to be one by 1923 when he stood for the Council on the Swarajist ticket and gotelected. He stood again in 1926 and was re-elected. His place was naturally on the Opposition Benches. Up to the time of his acceptance of Office Mr. Mudaliar's work in the Council was not much of a spectacular character. It was the kind of ordinary and unimpressive work which every conscientious and pains-taking representative can be expected to carry out. He was occasionally on his legs, sometimes putting interpellations and at other times making speeches but always concerning matters connected with his district and its people. It was a question regarding the resettlement of Tanjore, the benefit of the Mettur project to his district or a mass dismissal of many village-headmen. It was a speech mainly concerned with the forbidding tax on the Judicial stamps. Thus he was even guilty of narrow parochialism. Of course, he made his seasonal speeches on the budget every year and at times very good ones. Nor did he lack in frankness and free expression of his views. He has shown in his speeches his keen sense of the reality in unmistakable terms. He thoroughly exposed the inefficacy and waste of the profuse and ponderous eloquence of the elected members, in the matter of correcting the ways of the powers-that-be and even went so far as to confirm the popular conviction in the futility of dyarchy. Except for this routine work of a rather dull nature, he had not said much nor achieved anything till he found himself on the Treasury Bench.

Selfless in nature and strict in principles, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar was a scrupulous politician of the Swarajist School. When he was offered office in 1926 he refused to accept it. He deliberately chose the uncongenial and arid work of the Opposition to the sweets and substance of a seat on the Treasury Bench. But soon things began to happen which shook his faith and slowly but surely disillusioned him. He saw to his utter chagrin his own Swarajist colleagues—the sworn enemies of dyarchy, whose sole purpose in the Council was clogging the wheels of the Government—the tallest and the most vociferous of them, not merely sympathising with the Subbaroyan Ministry but also actively adding to its longevity and vigour. They were in an unholy and secret alliance with the ministry, what time they were vociferously proclaiming their destructive doctrines. This was a piece of political hypocrisy for which Mr. Mudaliar was not prepared. His sense of consistency was scandalised. He threw up his hands and cried out "These be the Swarajists!" This delectable game of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde in which the Swarajists indulged without the least "compunctious visitings of nature" was revolting to Mr. Muthia Mudaliar. He attended, as a member thereof, a meeting of the All-India Congress Committee held at Bombay and moved a resolution for instituting an enquiry into the conduct of the Madras Swarajists in the Council and taking disciplinary action. Though a full and free discussion of it was dodged and evaded, a committee, with Mr. Mudaliar in it was formed for the purpose.

But the very next day Mr. Mudaliar was told that the committee had sat, made its investigation and had absolved the Swarajists of all blame and misdemeanour. It was a bolt from the blue. It was too much for him. It was the last straw that broke his faith. This was adding an insult to injury and he was not the man to pocket it.

In a very real sense it was the Madras Swarajists that manufactured 'Communal' Non-Brahmins and constitutional Justicites. Those Swarajists' clannish sympathies and cunning tricks, their provoking conduct and their petty jealousies have driven out of their own camp men of firm faith and flawless discipline. With no other party to pay their allegiance to, these mighty malcontents either take shelter under the Justice Party or offer it their co-operation for all practical purposes. Thus had a host of sterling heroes like Sir Shunmukham, E. V. Ramasami, Dr. P. Varadarajulu and T. V. Kalyanasundara Mudaliar strayed from the Swarajist fold and stuck to the ranks of the opposite Party. And Mr. Muthia Mudaliar too went the way these people had gone. The moment he alighted at Madras he unburdened his heart to a Press correspondent. *Inter alia*, he described the position of his Swarajist contemporaries in an indignant tone and a picturesque simile that will ever be remembered by every one of us. "The position of the Swarajists," spoke out this sadly disillusioned man "is like that of a sanyasin who vows celibacy and refuses to marry a woman but revels in the arms of harlots." What a homely simile and what an exact picture! A

sentence of such classic cast has never been minted by a South Indian, either before or since. "There had not been anything like it since David went out with his sling and pebble and slew the Philistines." The nation was amazed at its aptness and astounded by his moral courage. And coming as it did from a sane and sober politician with no sabre-ratlling practices, it had a peculiar value in it. He became at once the cynosure of the neighbouring eyes. He shot up into the public gaze by virtue of these fine phrases even as Calvin Coolidge had shot up into fame in America by virtue of his magic words.

Soon came a crisis in the Madras Cabinet. Two of Dr. Subbaroyan's colleagues had been persuaded or fancied that they had found out that after all dyarchy is unworkable and that no self-respecting minister can work it. So in a fit of feverish patriotism and as a mark of their indignant protest, they resigned their jobs amidst the rapturous applause of the Press. They had made a tremendous sacrifice and were hence admitted into the enviable regions of immortal fame. Mr. Muthia Mudaliar was offered one of the seats and he accepted it with alacrity. Mr. Sethuratnam Iyer and himself stepped into the vacant shoes and sat on the Treasury Bench. Even the Justice Party was agreeable to this change and as is so well known to the world, the diplomatic Panagal too had something to do with its constitution. The Ministry had his blessings ever after that time.

James Ellis speaks of "some few" who "have a natural talent for office-holding." Mr. Muthia Mudaliar

is undoubtedly one of these few. It was as a minister in charge of important portfolios that he did the best part of his life work and it is as the same that he shall ever be remembered. The bold avowal by his immediate predecessors of the staggering sterility of dyarchy only made his responsibility the greater, at once to vindicate his conduct and the nature of dyarchy. And history will bear testimony to the fact that he was one of the very few ministers who have reaped the maximum of fruits from dyarchy with the minumum of risks. "Nothing indeed but the possession of some power" says Edmund Burke "can with any certainty discover what at the bottom is the true character of the man." Never was this saying more true of any one than of Mr. Muthia Mudaliar. A striking instance of his simplicity and hatred for ostentaciousness was his sticking to the same old simple house at Mylapore, without shifting to a showy and spacious bungalow, as might have been expected from one elevated to the office of a Minister. Despite his exalted position, he chose to be the plain Mr. Mudaliar with a humble habitation, with hardly any pomp. He was never upset by his elevation to the giddy heights. For he considered this office as nothing more than an agreeable, though exacting, change from his intricate briefs and endless toil. He took to his work in all seriousness and toiled with patience and strength. He has never once abused his power all through his official career, never even attempted to injure another. He was generous to his friends and forgiving to his foes.

The introduction of the principle of communal rotation in the matter of recruitment to services, with a view to prevent the preponderance of one community over others, had from the beginning been the ambition and ideal of the Justice Party in Madras. "Equal opportunities for all" has along been their motto and a little bit of work too had, of course, been attempted. But that reform of communal justice had to await the arrival of a Solon in the shape of Mr. Muthia Mudaliar, to be introduced in our Province. What the Justice Party had not dared to do, this Independent Nationalist Minister had the unique courage and good sense to introduce in the shape of a communal G. O. in the year 1929. At first applied in the Registration Department under his care, this principle was soon introduced to almost all services in the Province. To this bold step of a benevolent nature the Madras Province is indebted to Mr. Mudaliar. It was the first of its kind in the whole of India. And coming as it did from a Tanjorian, it bespoke a courage of no mean order on his part. It meant he had driven a coach and four on the pet theories of "efficiency first" of his enlightened electorate. Could anyone, with an eye on his re-election have ever dared such a dangerous policy?

As for the non-Brahmins themselves they have found out their real and sincere benefactor in Mr. Muthia Mudaliar. That august and ardent Leader of the Non-Brahmin public, Mr. E. V. Ramaswami spoke out not merely his own feelings but also those of millions of his fellowmen, when he exhorted at a public meeting:

"It is the sacred duty of every Non-Brahmin to commemorate the name of this courageous benefactor Mr. Muthia Mudaliar by christening his children after the latter." A great tribute indeed and by a great son of the soil and who but a great man could have called forth this spontaneous testimony of surging gratitude? Mr. Mudaliar is the idol of the Non-Brahmins, only they do not burn incense at his altar. But in every bread that many a Non-Brahmin break at their table, the image and work of this immortal figure rise up and remind them of his name!

No less important and in every sense decidedly more original was his dexterous handling of the vexing portfolio of Excise in Madras. The excise policy of the Government has always been a stick handy enough for the Opposition to beat the former with, in season and out of season. No less embarrassing was the nature of the excise revenue which is the indispensable feeding-stream of education and which could not be dispensed with or diverted without injuring the body politic. The successive Ministries in the dyarchic system have always found themselves on the horns of a dilemma, hardly knowing what to do. The inconvenient and immutable system of finance staring at their face on the one hand and the endless and merciless eloquence of the prohibitionists holding them up to the ridicule of an ununderstanding public on the other—the ministers were non-plussed and at their wits' end. But the bold Mr. Muthia Mudaliar wanted to see if he could not do something in this matter—something that would silence

the reformers and satisfy the Government at one stroke. He was not the type of man that throws off his hands in despair and bides his time by becoming a docile convert to political fatalism. He had an abundant faith in free-will, free-will not only of the ministers to choose the proper thing and do it at the proper time but also in the free-will of the people themselves to choose between drunkenness and sobriety, poverty and plenty. Compulsory Prohibition might have been desirable but he had no faith in it on principle. But was it possible either? No. It was impossible on two grounds. For one thing the present financial structure, unless subjected to a radical change, would forbid such a policy. Secondly, such a policy could not be a success in its very nature—as indeed the classical instance of America, which was quoted by the Reformers as an example and model, has so clearly demonstrated. Hence Mr. Mudaliar struck at a plan—a very original plan to constitute an Excise Propaganda Central Committee, with district committees and the most efficient staff all through the Province. He made a provision of four lakhs of rupees in the Budget for the propaganda expenses. It was the first time in the history of the whole world, with perhaps a single exception, that the Government of a country organised and financed an official propaganda on such a large scale and with so much enthusiasm and earnestness. It was original in conception and bold in execution. And throughout his tenure of office he had made provision for the amount in every Budget. But unfortunately his

'Justice' successor did or could not follow it up with patience and perseverence and the scheme was discontinued. If only this sane and practical scheme could be continued for at least a decade, there is no denying that it would have carried our Province very far towards voluntary prohibition. Even in the latest International Congress Against the Drink Evil that was held at the Imperial Institute at London during the first week of August, a commending reference to this policy of the Madras Minister (of course, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar) was made by Rev. Herbert Anderson, the first Secretary to the Prohibition League in India.

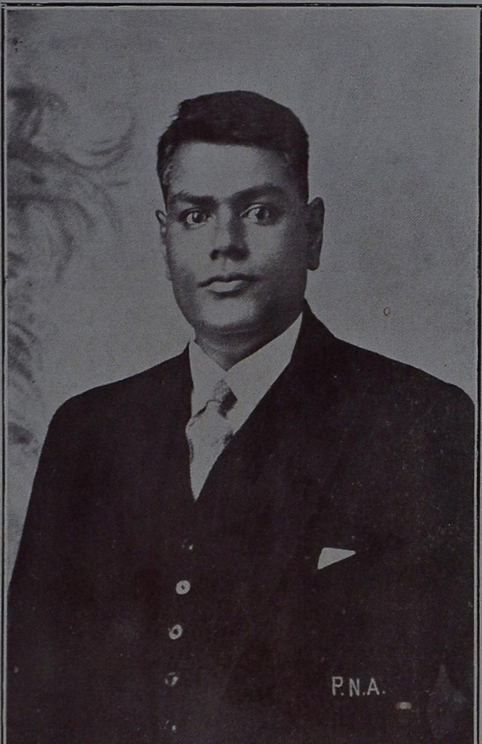
Besides the major policies and programmes, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar has made himself responsible for many a reform of minor character but of much usefulness. Here is a spontaneous tribute paid to him by Dr. S. Muthulakshmi Reddi, which will speak for itself. "We women are grateful to the then Minister, Mr. S. Muthia Mudaliar, who evinced a very keen interest in the question of medical relief to women and children and it was largely due to him that the provision in the budget for a Woman Director of Public Health Department, for an increased Maternity and Child Welfare staff and also for a liberal grant to the Red Cross Health School has been made." And she wound up this tribute with a necessary warning to his 'Justice' successor. "We hope that his successor would see that the grants are utilised for those schemes for which they have been already ear-marked".

As a Minister to the Government of Madras, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar was conscientious, painstaking and careful. So marvellously would he master every minute detail of his work, that the keenest and cleverest among the civilians who served under him as Secretaries had the greatest admiration for him. His kind and courteous manner combined with his very strict demeanour and vigilance won the unstinted praise of his official staff at the Secretariat. The tallest amongst the civilians dared not defy him. They were so much impressed with his common-sense and industry that they willingly conceded him the privilege of an "infallibility decree." He could not go wrong; at any rate he would not knowingly mislead was their firm conviction. He has built up in the Secretariat such a lofty and lovely tradition as has been hardly equalled by anything save that of Panagal.

Within a short span of about three years, Mr. Muthia Mudaliar has achieved many reforms and attempted more, than many a predecessor or successor of his. People with little ability and less record of work have gone forth amidst the gullible public and blown their own trumpet, boisterously and ever. But Mr. Mudaliar, ever shy and shunning the tricks of self-advertisement has chosen to recede to the back-ground, suffering his work to speak for itself. Though apparently contradictory, the throwing open of the Justice Party to the Brahmins and the introduction of communal rotation are in reality complementary to each other. The same principle of communal justice underlies both the

policies. If the one enables the Brahmins to enter the party and enjoy its benefits, the other prevents the same from monopolising all, having too much of the benefits. This is the soundest and the most statesmanlike twin policy that was ever adumbrated or attempted by an Indian minister. He himself would have effected the change in the Justice Party's creed at Nellore but for a narrow majority against him. Yet the Justice Party has chosen to pay him its compliment by fulfilling his hopes. Many do not know perhaps the attitude of the late Raja of Panagal towards Mr. Mudaliar, especially on the eve of the former's untimely demise. The frank, sincere and sportsmanlike leader that he was, the Rajah Saheb confessed to having mistaken Mr. Mudaliar for long and assured him of his unstinted affection and attachment to him ever after. What greater reward and what happier a consolation than this could a politician have expected? Mr. Mudaliar had always been doing his duty 'as ever in the great Task-master's eye', expecting no rewards and baiting for no prizes. A man of great courage, political integrity and unruffled nature, Mr. Mudaliar made the political life of Madras the poorer for his retirement. When he reverted to his original profession, he found many of his clients gone and his mighty bundle of briefs miserably diminished. Not that it was unexpected nor that he very much regrets for this. But in a world where sentimentalism is reigning and where sacrifice has been standardised, this kind of loss is not easily recognised as a sacrifice. He is yet active, ever vigilant and full of hopes too. In spite of

all the impressions to the contrary, this volcano at least is not exhausted, it is only slumbering. Any day it might burst out on the world and when it does burst out, well might the crowd wonderingly cry out "Here is a man, after all."


P.N.A.

DR. P. SUBBAROYAN, M.L.C.

A cursory, radiating glance from the visitors' gallery of the Madras Council is sure to be arrested by the prominent figure which occupies the first seat in the front row of the Opposition. There sits, half-reclining the huge and tall, comfortable-looking person of Dr. Subbaroyan, his massy head flung back and his legs stretched straight in front. Swimming through the mass of heads, our eyes would anchor on that projecting port. There is a swift attraction of our gaze to his person similar to that of iron filings to a magnet. He is a pleasing picture of amiable indifference. His face is full and broad and his eyes gleam blandly. His hair of black and silvery hue is closely cropped. His dress is so simple as to remind us that he is hardly worried about appearances. His broad, massive frame, like that of John Wheately "bespeaks a healthy appetite and a good digestion." He looks the soul of cheerfulness, a child-like, open smile often playing on his lips.

As the Doctor sits there, his gaze abstractedly fixed on the wall opposite, his whole aspect looks that of one who, tired after a gallop full of thrill and gusto, is enjoying a holiday on the Opposition Benches. The mighty mare of ministerial power, to whose vagaries and vicious stunts he is no stranger, recklessly speeds through dark woods and deep vales, unhorsing from its saddle unbelieving Pauls. It amuses him much; he enjoys it immensely. The sunny smile would broaden and burst

into a child-like ringing laughter but for the Speaker's immediate presence in the Chair. But soon his smile gives place to signs of discontent. He becomes restive. He feels he has been unconscionably long a resting. The music of the trotting hoofs makes him long for a ride. He is all agog to have another leap on to the saddle.

One is tempted to ask about Dr. P. Subbaroyan the same old query that has been so often asked about Mr. Stanley Baldwin. "Was he an accident or was he the architect of events? If an accident, was he a happy accident? If the architect of events, was he a good architect?" Dewan Bahadur A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar is puzzled by this phenomenon, Mr. S. Satymurthi is equally perplexed and Sir A. P. Patro can make nothing of it.

Dr. Subbaroyan has succeeded, as his proto-type in England had done, in alternately eliciting the approbations and opprobriums of both the parties in the Council. "Here's the veritable Moses of our Party, a great Champion of Non-Brahmins" rejoice the Justicites, when he enforces the Communal G. O's. But when these men array themselves against him, the stalwarts of the Swaraj party, posing themselves as his friends cry out "We ought on principle to oppose any Ministry. But the Doctor being better than the Justicites, let's help him, if only covertly."

Again, Dr. Subbaroyan's, like Mr. Baldwin's, is a 'second class brain.' He had been in the Reformed Council

for six long years without creating a ripple in the waters. No doubt he was secretary to a minister for sometime, resigned that job, went over to the side of Mr. C. R. Reddy and the Swarajists and voted against the ministry. But all these constituted no event of importance to anyone. There ended his early political peregrinations. Except for this, he occupied his seat, voted without worry and went home to dinner. If in 1925 one should have taken the pains to enquire who Dr. Subbaroyan was, one would have learnt nothing more than that he hails from a high and rich family in Salem District, he had married a Brahmin lady of education and culture from Mangalore and that he was in the Council because it was easy for him to be there.

But the hour of his emergence struck in 1926. The disastrous reverses for the Justice party in the general elections thinned its ranks in the House and made its continuance in power impossible. Swarajists could not accept office, even if they would. But any one who could venture to form a ministry, ostensibly with the support of the non-Justicite non-descripts euphemistically called the Independents, may count on their tacit help at any time. Here was a chance for the Doctor. With circumstances so favourable and his star in the ascendent Doctor Subbaroyan boldly formed a Ministry. It certainly required boldness. The Justicites were definitely in the Opposition. The Swarajists were after all 'candid friends.' And at any time he might feel like crying to be saved from his candid friends. If perchance he should fail there is no doubt he would have

failed gloriously. Only thirty-four and with neither genius nor any antecedent political apprenticeship—the Doctor was ushered into the stage. But none did look the part and play the part more successfully than he. No premature grave greeted his ministry, no abrupt ending marred it. He steered clear off shoals and rocks. He managed to run the full course of the natural life of the council. To have done this was to have proved to be the fittest and to have survived the shocks.

He had all the advantages of a 'second class brain' with none of its disadvantages. Happily immune was he from the himalayan blunders and blazing indiscretion that a genius is too prone to commit. Political superstitions did not sway his sober judgment, they did not blur his vision of the realities. He was not swept off his feet by the gale of popular feelings. His Colleagues Mr. A Ranganatha Mudaliar and the late Mr. Arokiaswamy Mudaliar made a profound discovery overnight that dyarchy was unworkable. They realised to their profound regret that honey could come easier from stone than good from dyarchy. They obeyed the dictates of their conscience and resigned their respective posts. It was a tremendous sacrifice that they made. The nationalist Press grew ecstatic over it. Their photos were published and three-column editorials were flashed in almost every journal in Madras. Their verdict on dyarchy was conclusive, it was the judgment of the Doomsday. They pretended they had sung the obsequies of dyarchy. Deafening cheers and long drawn 'jais' greeted their ears and thrilled their hearts.

This was indeed a great temptation—the applause of the populace, the appreciation of the Press and an assured place in the temple of fame—who could have resisted such a temptation and yet reaped contentment? Yet Dr. Subbaroyan did both. His faith in dyarchy was fanatic. It could not be shaken. His opulent optimism would not indulge in such cheap heroism. The mysteries and marvellous potentialities of dyarchy could not be so easily unravelled as his colleagues had pretended. To run away from its imperfections—he was in all conscience aware of some—was simply to run away from life. It amounted to a confession of defeat. He was out for making experiments with dyarchy. They were no less earnestly undertaken than the experiments with truth by a greater Indian. He would not willingly be scared away by the very first rift in the dyarchical lute. The question of workability or otherwise of dyarchy was the work of the constitutional experts. Two other colleagues were ready to step into the breach and they stood by him to the end loyally and firmly. With his own tenacity of purpose and the resourceful diplomacy of Panagal lending itself to him, he carried on merrily.

It is no doubt true that Dr. Subbaroyan is the leader of the Independent Party in the Council. But it is a party without a programme. It is neither a fish, flesh nor a good red herring. Elasticity and ecclecticism are the leading features of his politics. Perhaps the nomenclature of his party better describes its nature. He has never been independent of either of the Party

in the Council. Whenever he did not bask in the sunshine of the Panagalites he had to bargain with the Swarajists for support. With little affection for the Justicites and no antipathy for the Swarajists. Dr. Subbaroyan tactfully keeps the balance between the two. He would attend a Party given in honour of a Justicite at 5 p.m. and would visit a Congress Ashram at six to pay his respects to the victims of the Police wrath. Nor does he set a high value on his independent creed. Without any compunctious visitings of nature he can disavow his creed, if only he could be sure of being the better for it. The facility with which he tried to become a life member of S. I. L. F. and dashed off to Nellore to attend the Confederation is yet another instance of this ecclecticism in politics. Perhaps the urge of ambition was all powerful. Perhaps the end in view justified the means. The leadership of the Justice Party was worth any sacrifice, even of life-long loyalties. Life is to the Doctor, as it was to Lord Birkenhead an adventure, a jolly scrap, a rough and tumble affair in which 'he will take who has the power and he will keep who can.' No doubt he was disappointed. But disappointments never disturb his equanimity. He is a true sportsman. He swallowed the disappointment along with an apple and returned home with the revived convictions of an 'independent nationalist.' The grapes might have been sour and he would not try for them again.

The diplomas and degrees that balast his name are more an appendix of his academic distinctions than an

index of his profound erudition. In spite of his irresistible attractions for the 'Steel frame' service he became a votary in the altar of the Inner Temple. Though he was called to the Bar, he never made it his calling. Politics are a profession to some and a hobby to others. Dr. Subbaroyan loves that hobby with passion. None had been less equipped than the Doctor when he accepted office but none was astuter and cleverer when he laid it down. No other Minister seems to have received a better discipline and schooling in his office. Oratory is an art utterly unknown to him. Nor is he a fine debater. But he has trained himself to speak easily and well, simply and sensibly. He has covered miles on the high-road to speech-making during the period of his Ministry. It was, I believe in the year 1931 when Mr. Sami Venkatachalam Chetti made one of his best speeches condemning the police action. No one who heard that speech or witnessed the scene will ever forget either. The afternoon sun of Madras summer filtered into the sombre and crowded chamber. Expectant and anxious crowds filled up the Visitors', President's and Press galleries. Pin-drop silence prevailed throughout the House and every member was in his seat. There arose the Leader of the Opposition with solemnity and dignity quite in keeping with the occasion and made a speech, seconding the resolution—a speech full of pathos, dignity and naturalness. It was brief but the very brevity was its virtue. No doubt the occasion lent it an austerity that is never his ordinary attribute. But it was one of his best performances.

Dr. Subbaroyan is no master of satire. Epigrams and aphorisms are alien to his speeches. He can neither lash nor stab with his tongue. Irony and wit are not his strong points. If ever he attempts them his success is doubtful. Replying to the discussion on his amendment to the White Paper in the Madras Council in March last he quoted the Secretary of State and said that "many delegates (of the first R. T. C.) could not understand the complicated problems of Federation and that there was a rush at the bookshops at London for purchasing books on Federation and he hoped that among the many who purchased books, Sir Patro also counted himself as one." It was, however, not this feeble humour but the child-like reply of "No" by Sir Patro that created laughter in the Council. In the wake of this ineffective humour he ventured on a stroke of sarcasm which was neither effective nor happy. He was glad he said that Sir Patro was not among them but there were people who did not take Sir Patro at his word. But when he has said an unpleasant thing the Doctor would willingly say '*Peccavi*' like the honest Sir Austen Chamberlain. So he stood up and qualified or rather explained himself by saying that he meant Sir Patro was not taken at his word with regard to the question of Federation.

He has no insatiable thirst for his enemies' blood. Vengeance and vendetta never vitiate his mind. The hinterlands of his mind are not marred by dark woods and unhealthy marshes. You need not labouringly feel your way to his heart through a labyrinth of little-minded passions. Though he quails not before a crisis and

though he can fight his enemy fiercely, he can also forget and forgive with equal facility. He carries not the blood-dripping wounds of his enemy's blows on to the dinner table or into the streets. He has a ready and pleasing smile even for his foe, a hail-fellow-well-met attitude ever for his friends. The episode of his contest during the general elections of 1930 is as painful as it is hardly creditable to his opponents. For once healthy principles had given way to personal antagonism. Perhaps the delirium of election fever deadens our conscience. But Dr. Subbaroyan did succeed.

A man of few words, Dr. Subbaroyan always believes in action. He has understood more than many a compeer in the Council the meaning of the adage that an ounce of pratice is better than a ton of theory. And he always strove to translate his convictions into actions and acts. 'Want of funds' is the wonted apologia with which every Minister confronts whenever a reform is needed. But none employed this protective shield more sparingly than the Doctor. The establishment of the Annamalai University would by itself render his regime memorable. The Madras District Municipalities Act and Local Boards Act with many a beneficent feature incorporated in them are a definite improvement on the previous ones. He had set about abolishing untouchability long before the present agitation was thought of. It was an original G. O. that he passed, withholding government grants to the educational institutions refusing admission to Adidravida boys. And at the time when it was passed it was a bold one too. Its boldness can be no better

evidenced than by the appalling lack of courage evinced by his successor in enforcing it strictly. A Brahmo by creed, Mr. Subbaroyan hates caste. He has bravely and unflinchingly stood for and fostered the cause of social reform wherever possible and within his departments positively. He would not waste large grants on an institution like the Widows' Home if it continued to mete out differential treatment to Brahmin and non-Brahmin widows. Perhaps his chief claim to fame lies in his indefatigable and earnest services in the cause of Indian womanhood to which eloquent testimony has been borne by Dr. Muthulakshmi, the august spokes-woman of her sex. It was during his time that women were nominated in large numbers to the local boards, that training schools for women were opened everywhere and compulsory physical training and compulsory medical inspection for boys and girls were introduced. Free secondary education for girls was another feature of his reform. Surely his regime has been the most convincing argument against the detractors of dyarchy's fertility of good. Possibly he got the maximum of good out of it with the minimum of risks. The wonder is not merely as Dr. Johnson would say, that he has done this at all. The wonder is that he has done so well.

The name of Dr. Subbaroyan was of late too much in the air as the prospective author of the Temple Entry Bill. In the morning people were oblivious to his name but at night there was hardly a tongue that did not pronounce his name with passionate love. He caught the imagination of the nation at a psychological

hour by flashing his Bill. The Indian public was in one of its periodical fits of morality. Its mind had been worked up to a high pitch of sympathy for the un-touchables by Gandhiji's fast. The iron was hot, the hammer lay near by, who could strike it ? Why, there was Dr. Subbaroyen who leapt into the blazing limelight by a timely, tactical hit. This shows clearly his knowledge of human nature and capacity to conceive quickly and act boldly. His triumph is a triumph of mediocrity trained in tactics. This does not mean he has no sincerity. But sincerity alone without swift decision is useless. Who knows it better than he? Pluck he has in plenty and luck favouring, Doctor Subbaroyan has yet a future at least as glorious as his past!

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